



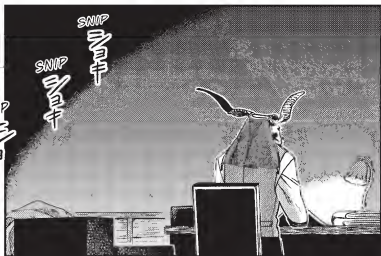
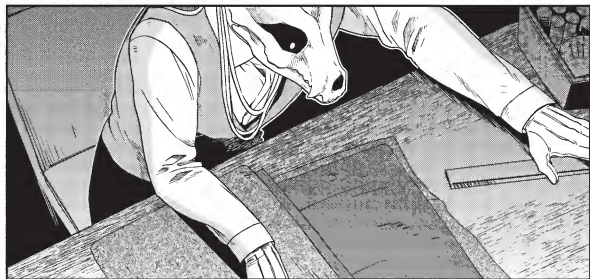
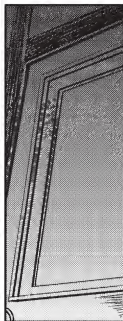
The Ancient Magus' Bride

Story & Art by
KORE YAMAZAKI

The Ancient Magus' Bride









Chapter 26: God's mill grinds slow but sure. I



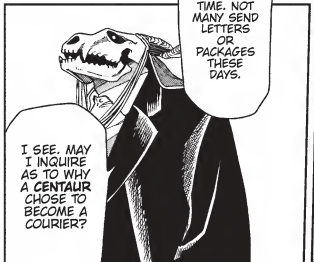
NO, NO,
NOT TO
WORRY!

APOLOGIES
FOR BEING
SO LATE
WITH THEM
EVERY
YEAR.



TRUTH
IS...

I GREATLY
APPRECIATE
YOUR
BUSINESS
AT ANY
TIME. NOT
MANY SEND
LETTERS
OR
PACKAGES
THESE
DAYS.



I SEE. MAY
I INQUIRE
AS TO WHY
A CENTAUR
CHOSE TO
BECOME A
COURIER?



THANK
YOU
KINDLY,
MASTER
AINS-
WORTH!

I'LL SEE
THESE
PARCELS
SAFELY
TO THEIR
DESTIN-
ATIONS IN
A BLINK!



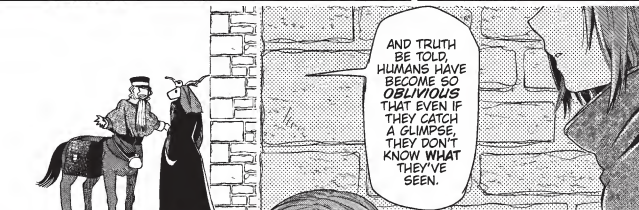
I'VE
BEEN
GIFTED
WITH GOOD,
STRONG
LEGS THAT
LET ME
TRAVEL
FAR AND
WIDE.

I'D
RATHER
NOT LIVE
A QUIET
LIFE DEEP
IN THE
MOORS,
OUT OF
HUMAN
SIGHT.



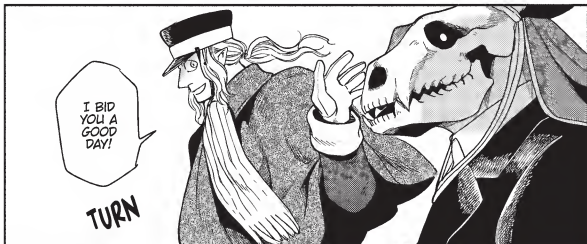
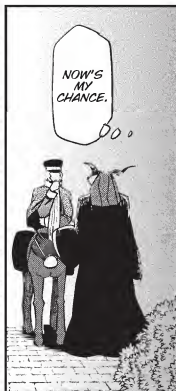
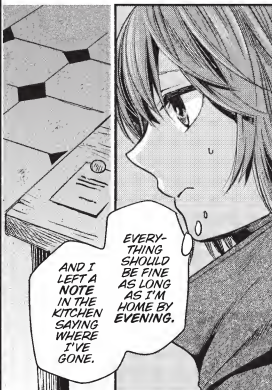
HA
HA HA!
I GUESS
YOU
MIGHT
CALL
IT A
HOBBY.

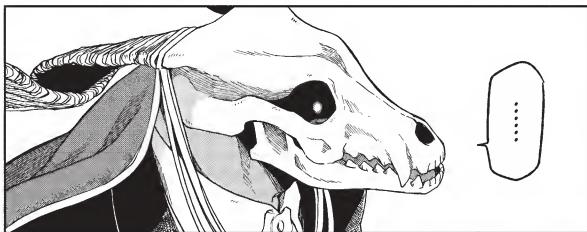
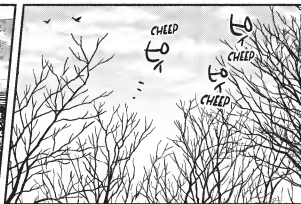
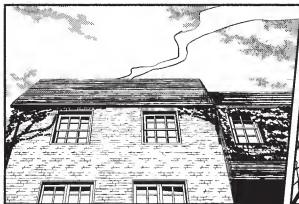
I'M GLAD
YOU DID,
I MIGHT
ADD, YOUR
SERVICES
ARE A
GREAT
BOON.

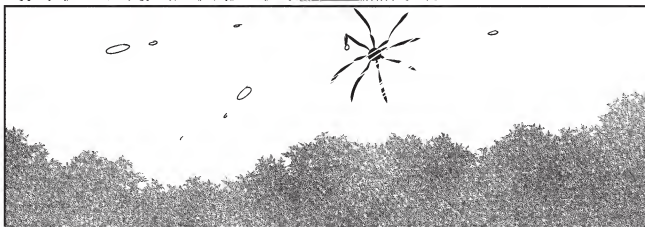
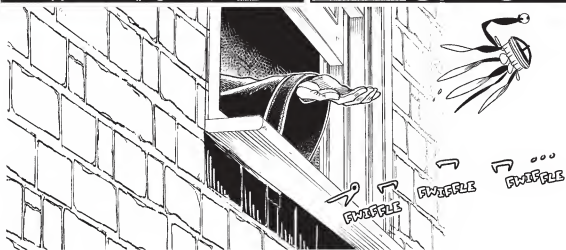
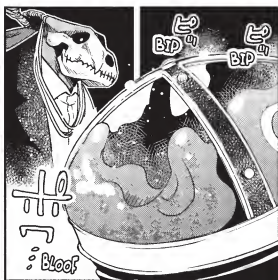


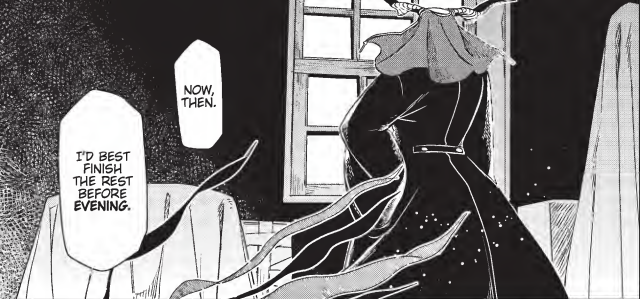
AND TRUTH
BE TOLD,
HUMANS HAVE
BECOME SO
OBVIOUS
THAT EVEN IF
THEY CATCH
A GLIMPSE,
THEY DON'T
KNOW WHAT
THEY'VE
SEEN.

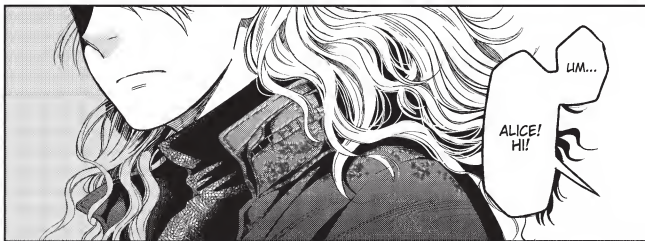
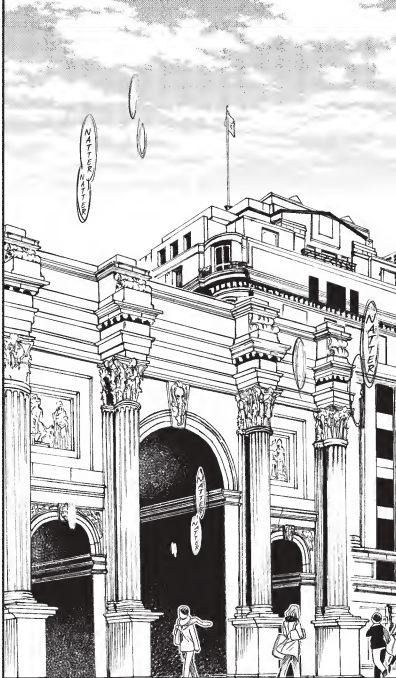
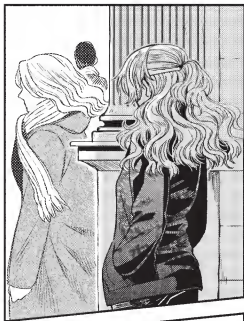














If this is a trap and she's got something up her sleeve, I'm gonna bite her.

YOU COULD STAY OUT IF YOU WANTED.

ZLORRP



Chise.

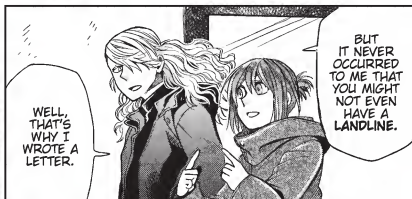
I'll be in your shadow.

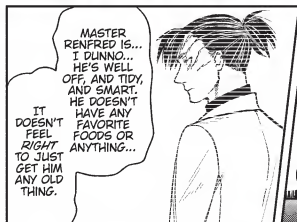
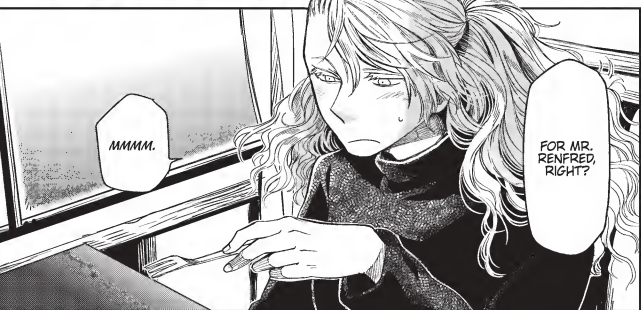


NO, THAT'S OKAY.

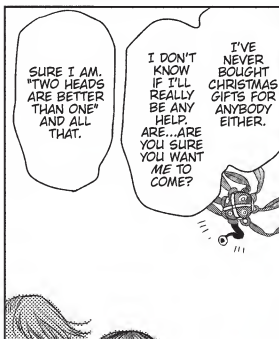
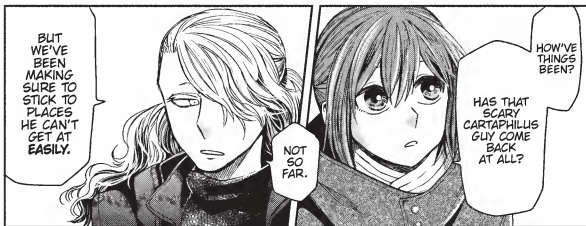
SORRY FOR DRAGGING YOU ALL THE WAY OUT TO LONDON.

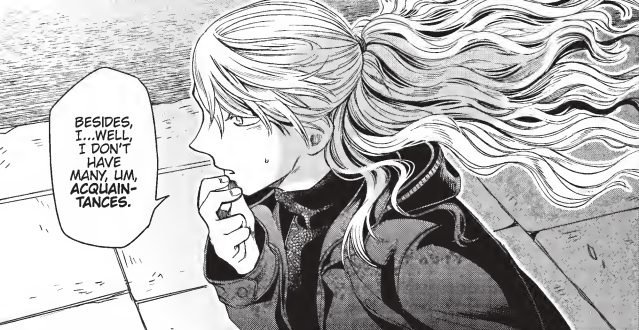
YO, CHISE.



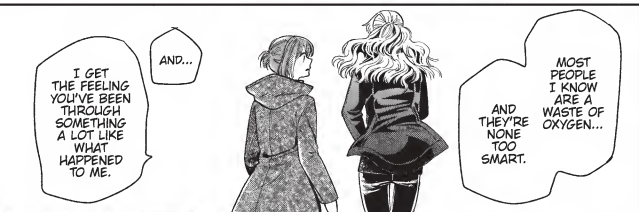








BESIDES,
I...WELL,
I DON'T
HAVE
MANY, UM,
ACQUAIN-
TANCES.



I GET
THE FEELING
YOU'VE BEEN
THROUGH
SOMETHING
A LOT LIKE
WHAT
HAPPENED
TO ME.

AND...

MOST
PEOPLE
I KNOW
ARE A
WASTE OF
OXYGEN...

AND
THEY'RE
NONE
TOO
SMART.



THEN
IT'S ALL
GOOD.



WELL...

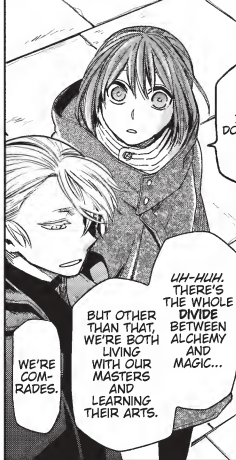
I GUESS
IT FELT
EASIER
TO REACH
OUT TO YOU
THAN ANY-
ONE ELSE.



I...

I DON'T
HAVE
MANY
ACQUAIN-
TANCES
EITHER.

.....



IT
DOES?

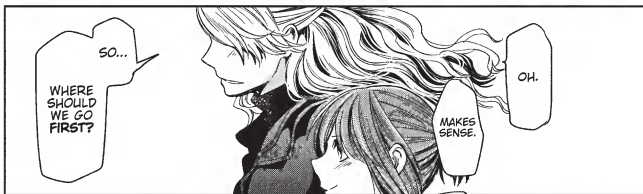
WE'RE
COM-
RADES.

UH-HUH.
THERE'S
THE WHOLE
DIVIDE
BETWEEN
ALCHEMY
AND
MAGIC...

BUT OTHER
THAN THAT,
WE'RE BOTH
LIVING
WITH OUR
MASTERS
AND
LEARNING
THEIR ARTS.



I'D
SAY THAT
MAKES US
COMRADES.



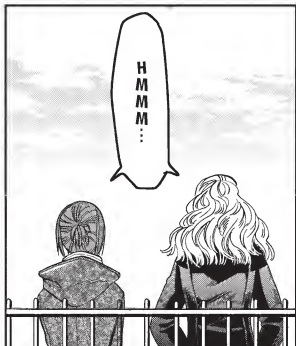
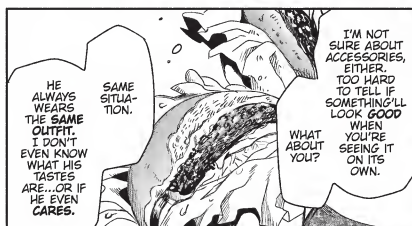
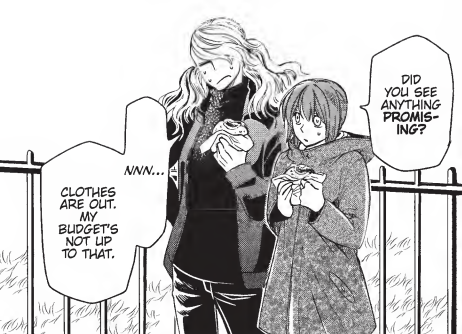
SO...

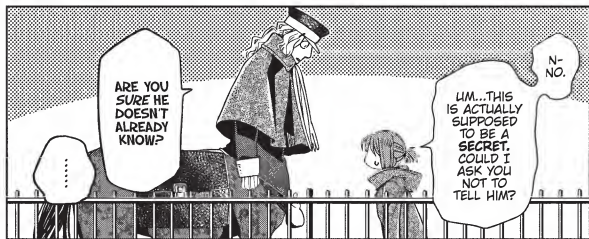
WHERE
SHOULD
WE GO
FIRST?

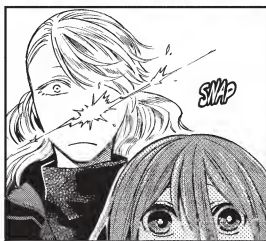
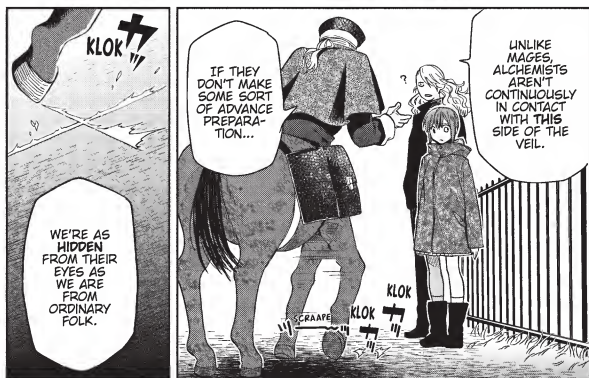
OH.

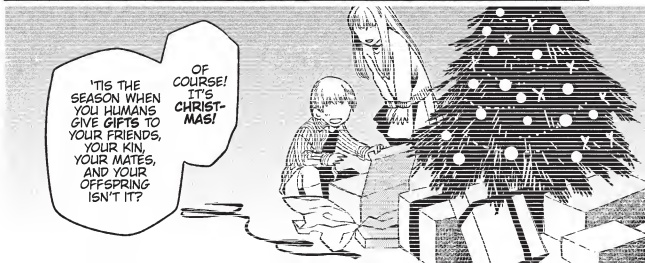
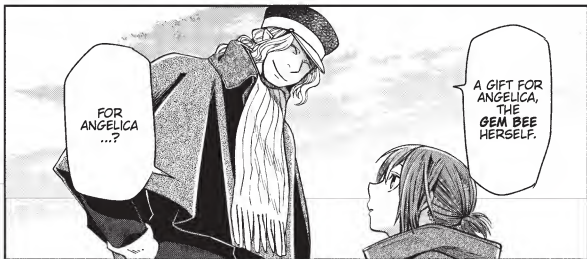
MAKES
SENSE.













IF YOU
REVIEW ALL
YOUR OWN
KNOWLEDGE
OF THEM, I'M
SURE SOME
KIND OF
INSPIRATION
WILL STRIKE.

WHAT
SORTS OF
THINGS DO THEY
LIKE? WHAT
WOULD MAKE
THEM HAPPY?
WHAT DO THEY
TEND TO USE
OFTEN?

THINK
GOOD
AND HARD
ABOUT
THAT
PERSON.



IN THE
END, IT'S
NOT THE
GIFT ITSELF
THAT
MATTERS.



BUT IT
NEEDN'T
BE SOME-
THING SO
PERMANENT.

WE
CENTAURS
ALSO LIKE
SUCH THINGS
AS ARROW-
HEADS OR
GOOD, STRONG
TIMBER.
EMBROIDERY
THREAD, DYES
FOR FABRIC...
THAT SORT
OF THING.



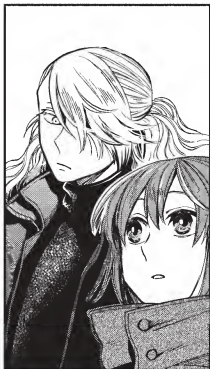
EQUIP-
MENT FOR
ACTIVITIES
YOU MIGHT
ENJOY
TOGETHER...

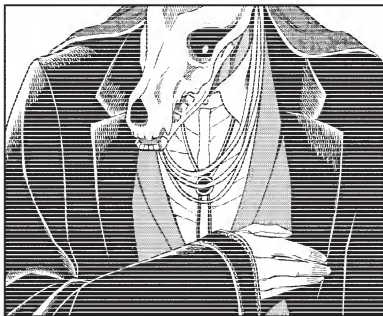
LOVELY,
TASTY
FLOWERS...
SWEET
CAKES
OR FINE
WINE...

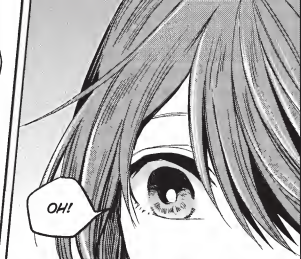


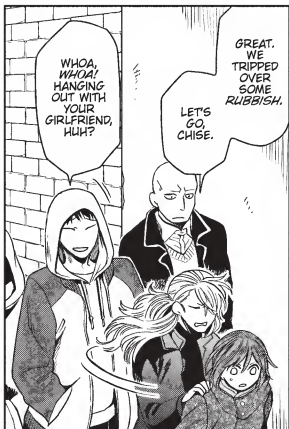
FOR FOLKS
TO GIVE AND
RECEIVE AND
DEMONSTRATE
THEIR
AFFECTION
FOR
OTHERS.

THE GIFT
IS ONLY A
MEANS,
AND
CHRISTMAS
THE
EXCUSE...









WHOA,
WHOA!
HANGING
OUT WITH
YOUR
GIRLFRIEND,
HUH?

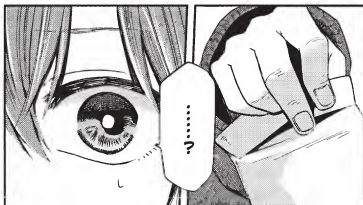
LET'S
GO,
CHISE.

GREAT.
WE
TRIPPED
OVER
SOME
RUBBISH.

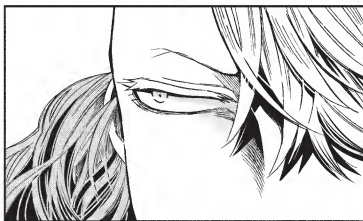


THOUGHT
YOU'D BE
IN THE
SLAMMER
OR A
COFFIN BY
NOW. BUT
LOOK AT
YOU, ALL
GROWN UP.

WELL,
WELL!
WHERE
YA BEEN,
SWEETIE?
AIN'T SEEN
YOU IN
A WHILE.
MOVED
OVER INTO
SOME OTHER
BLOKE'S
TURF?



.....



I'M
HAPPY
TO GIVE
AN OLD
FRIEND
A DEAL,
TOO.

BET A
LITTLE
MORE
CASH'D
MAKE IT
AN EVEN
BETTER
DAY.



I DON'T
DO IT,
AND I
DON'T
PUSH IT.

I'M NOT
INTO
THAT
STUFF
ANY-
MORE.



BUT I'VE
MOVED ON.
THAT'S NOT
MY LIFE
ANYMORE.

THANKS
FOR
LOOKING
OUT FOR
ME BACK
IN THE
DAY...

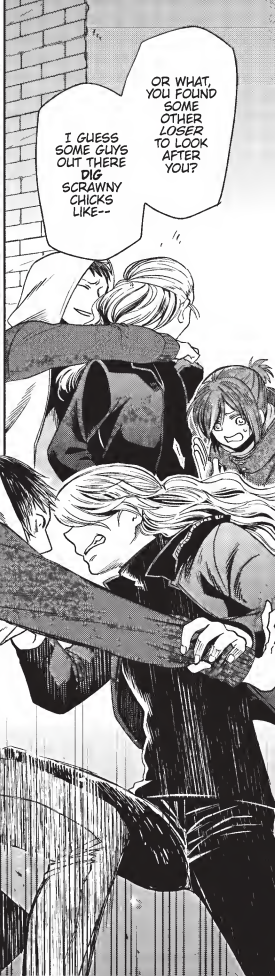
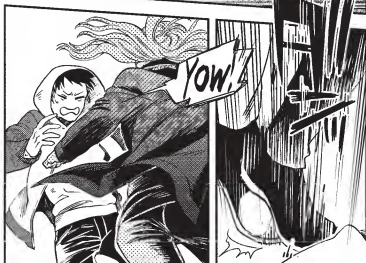
PUSH

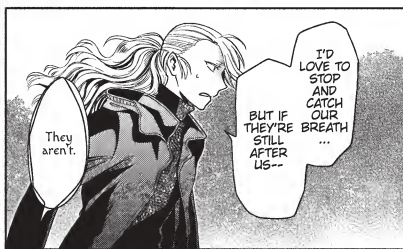
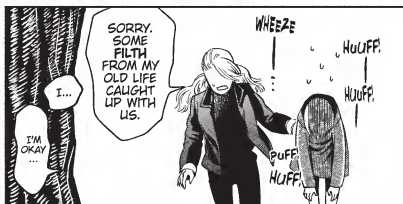
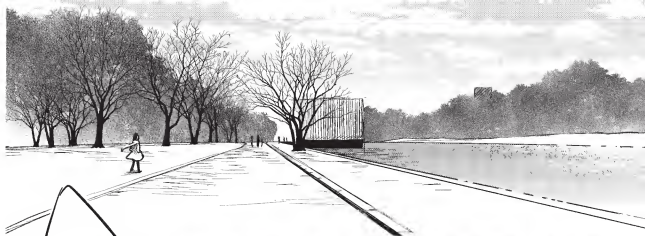
LET'S
GO.

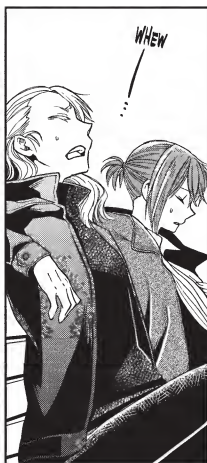


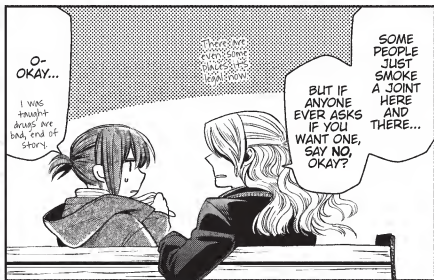
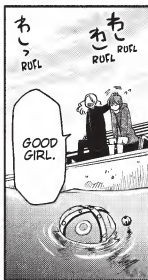
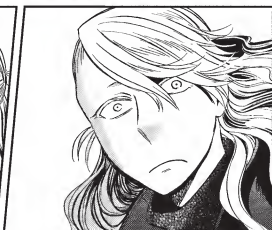
ONCE A
JUNKIE,
ALWAYS
A JUNKIE,
YOU
SKINNY
LITTLE
TRICK.

HOLD UP.
I GAVE YOU
A LONG
LEASH FOR
A FEW
YEARS, BUT
THAT DON'T
MEAN
YOU'RE
NOT STILL
MINE.











They're all over the place!

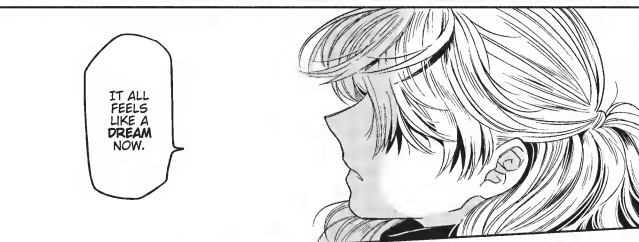


I'M THE KIND WHO CAN'T KEEP WEIGHT ON EVEN IF I TRY, SO THEY HIT ME EXTRA HARD.

AND TRYING TO STOP USING THEM MAKES YOU WANT TO DIE, IT'S SO HARD.

ALMOST ALL DRUGS ARE BAD FOR YOU IN SOME WAY OR OTHER, AND THEY CAN MESS YOU UP REAL GOOD.

Withdrawals no joke!

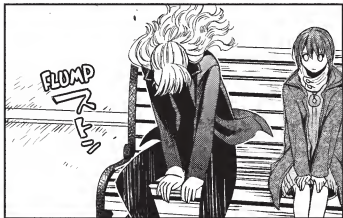
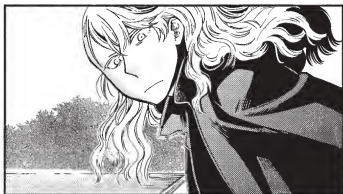


IT ALL FEELS LIKE A DREAM NOW.



UNTIL I DIED IN SOME DITCH, WITH NO ONE LEFT TO MISS ME.

IF MY MASTER HADN'T FOUND ME, I'D BE IN A GUTTER SOMEWHERE...
FILTHY AND ALONE, PUSHING DRUGS AND GETTING BEATEN UP...









WHAT THE
HECK YOU'RE
STARING
AT, HUH?



YOU
LOOKING
TO SCORE?
I AIN'T
DOING
THAT ANY-
MORE.

GO FIND
SOMEONE
ELSE TO
HOOK
YOU UP--

SWFF



DO
YOU...

ENJOY
THE LIFE
YOU'RE
LEADING?



HMM.

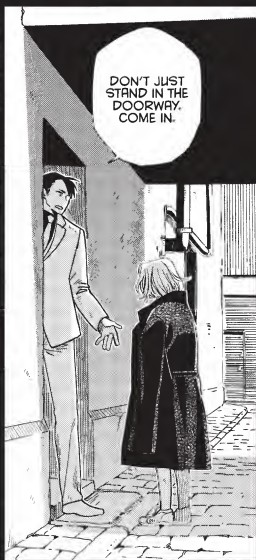
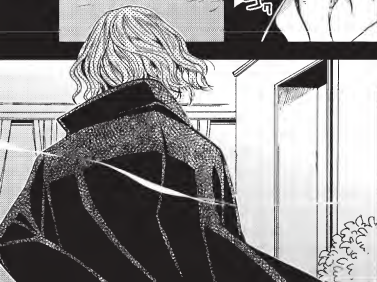
AN
ADEQUATE
AMOUNT.

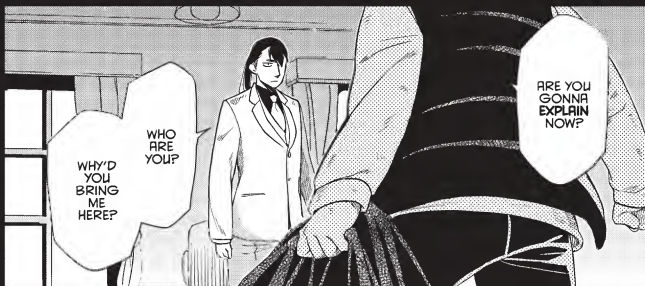
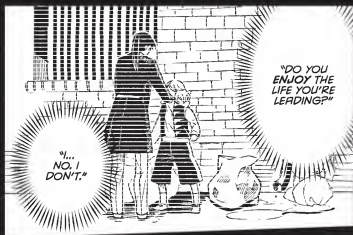
?!
BONK

Chapter 27: God's mill grinds slow but sure. II



Chapter 27: God's mill grinds slow but sure. II







DO YOU
USE DRUGS
BECAUSE
YOU CHOSE
TO, ALICE?

ALICE.

WHAT'S
YOUR
NAME?



LIKE I'D
DO THAT
CRAP
'CAUSE
I WANTED
TO.

HMPH!

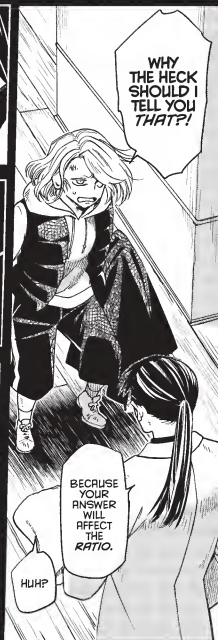


NO MONEY,
NO HOME, A
DRUG HABIT...
WHAT KIND OF
CHOICE DID I
HAVE BESIDES
DEALING THE
STUFF?



THAT
WAY THEY
COULD
MAKE
ME GO
WHEN THEY
NEEDED
MORE.

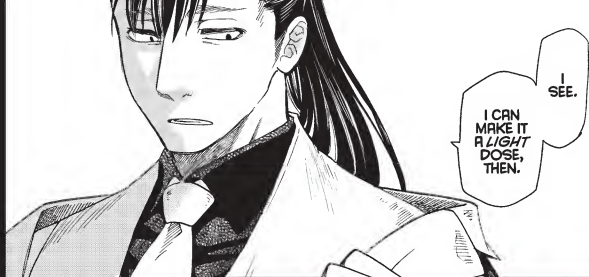
MY FOLKS
WERE
JUNKIES.
THEY MADE
SURE I GOT
HOOKED,
TOO.



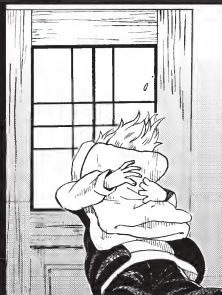
WHY
THE HECK
SHOULD I
TELL YOU
THAT?!

BECAUSE
YOUR
ANSWER
WILL
AFFECT
THE
RATIO.

HUHP



I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT.

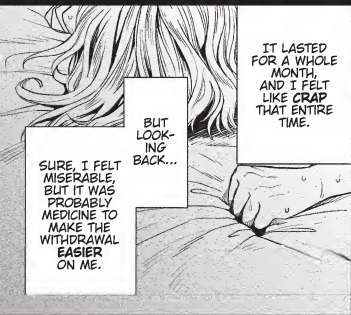




I COULDN'T
STOP
SHAKING.
ALL I
COULD
TASTE
WAS SOME
NASTY
MEDICINE.



NEXT THING
I KNEW,
I WAS
LYING
IN A BED
FOR THE
FIRST
TIME IN
FOREVER.



IT LASTED
FOR A WHOLE
MONTH,
AND I FELT
LIKE CRAP
THAT ENTIRE
TIME.

BUT
LOOK-
ING
BACK...

SURE, I FELT
MISERABLE,
BUT IT WAS
PROBABLY
MEDICINE TO
MAKE THE
WITHDRAWAL
EASIER
ON ME.



AN
"ALCHE-
MIST"?



YOU
MUST BE
ABLE TO,
RIGHT?

YEAHP
SHOW ME
SOME
MAGIC
THEN.



THERE ARE
COUNTLESS
THINGS OUT
THERE THAT
HIDE FROM
HUMAN
EYES.

THE
WORLD
IS MUCH
LARGER
AND
STRANGER
THAN YOU
THINK.



NEVER
HEARD OF
IT. ARE YOU
TRYING TO
SUCKER
ME?



AND LIKE
CHEMISTRY,
IT DELVES INTO
THE COMPOSITION
AND WORKINGS
OF THE WORLD
AROUND US.
WE JUST LOOK
AT IT FROM
ANOTHER
ANGLE.

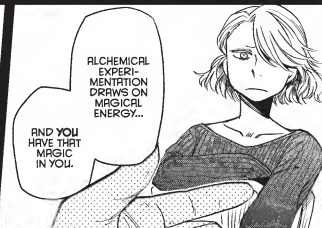
ALCHEMY'S
A SCIENCE--
LIKE A
BRANCH
OF
CHEMISTRY.

IT'S NO
PARLOR
TRICK FOR
ENTERTAINING
PEOPLE.



IT'S LIKE
RECOGNIZING
A FAMILIAR
SCENT. ONCE
YOU TRY,
YOU'LL
UNDERSTAND.

NONE
OF THIS
MAKES
SENSE.



ALCHEMICAL
EXPERI-
MENTATION
DRAWS ON
MAGICAL
ENERGY...

AND YOU
HAVE THAT
MAGIC
IN YOU.



ALICE...

OPPOR-
TUNITY
HAS COME
KNOCK-
ING.

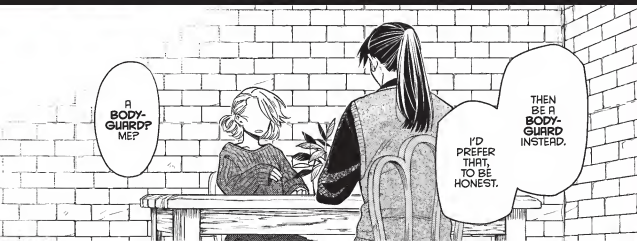


I...I DON'T
REALLY
WANT TO
BE A
STUDENT...



IF YOU
DO,
LIFE WILL
BECOME
LESS
PAINFUL.

I SUGGEST
YOU GRAB
IT WITH BOTH
HANDS AND
HANG ON
TIGHT.



A
BODY-
GUARD?
ME?

I'D
PREFER
THAT,
TO BE
HONEST.

THEN
BE A
BODY-
GUARD
INSTEAD.



SO...WHAT
EXACTLY
DO YOU
WANT ME
TO DO,
HUH?

IT'S NOT
UNCOMMON
FOR US
TO HIRE
MERCENARIES
FOR
PROTECTION.

IN OUR
LINE OF
WORK,
WE OFTEN
MAKE
ENEMIES.

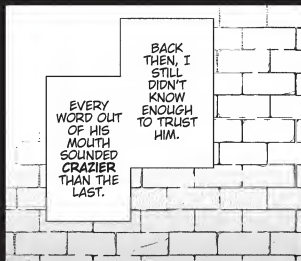
YES,
YOU'D BE
GUARDING
ME.



I...
I DON'T
KNOW.



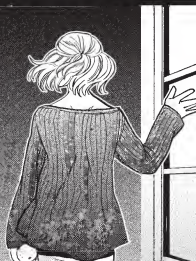
WHAT
DO YOU
WANT
TO DO?



EVERY
WORD OUT
OF HIS
MOUTH
SOUNDED
CRAZIER
THAN THE
LAST.

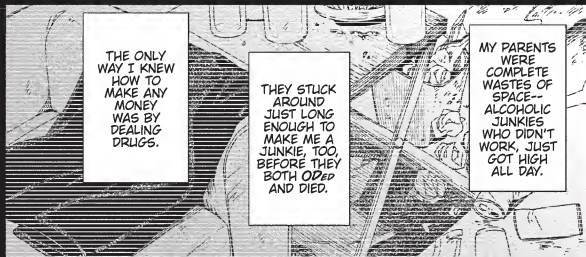
BACK
THEN, I
STILL
DIDN'T
KNOW
ENOUGH
TO TRUST
HIM.

BUT I
GUESS I
DON'T MIND
WORKING
TO EARN
MY KEEP,
AT LEAST.





I THOUGHT
HE WAS
A TOTAL
LOON,
TO BE
HONEST.



THE ONLY
WAY I KNEW
HOW TO
MAKE ANY
MONEY
WAS BY
DEALING
DRUGS.

THEY STUCK
AROUND
JUST LONG
ENOUGH TO
MAKE ME A
JUNKIE, TOO,
BEFORE THEY
BOTH ODeD
AND DIED.

MY PARENTS
WERE
COMPLETE
WASTES OF
SPACE--
ALCOHOLIC
JUNKIES
WHO DIDN'T
WORK, JUST
GOT HIGH
ALL DAY.

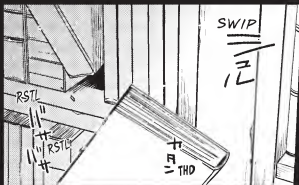
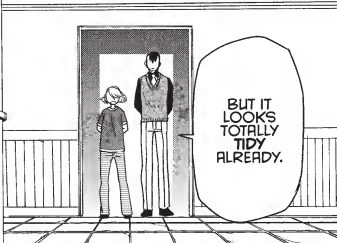


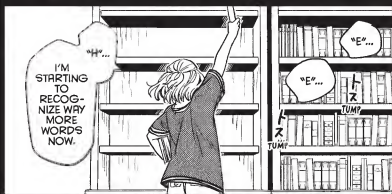
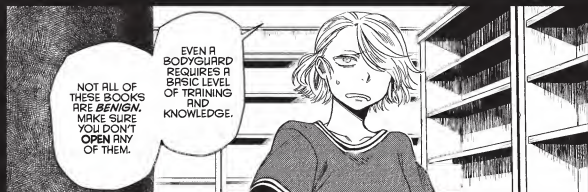
BUT
THEN...
SOME-
THING
HAPPENED.

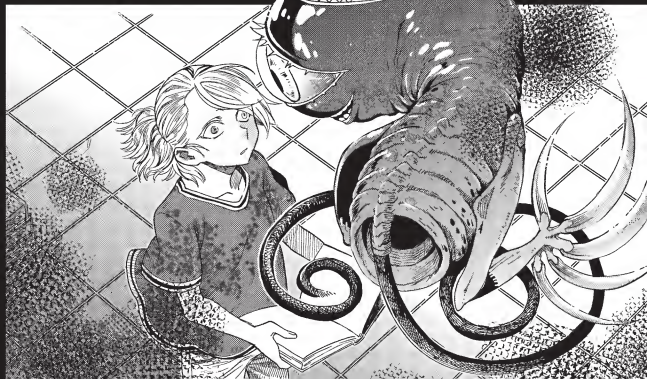
ORGA-
NIZE
YOUR
LIBRARY?

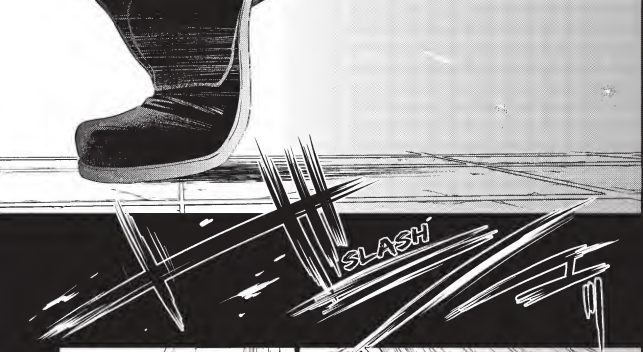


AFTER
ALL THAT,
ASKING ME
TO TRUST
SOMEONE
WAS LIKE
ASKING FOR
THE MOON.











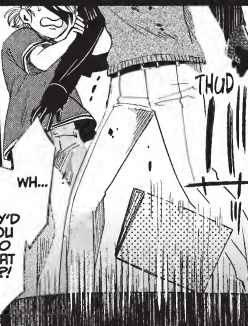
I CLEARLY SAID
DO NOT
OPEN
THE
BOOKS!

BONK!!!



WH...

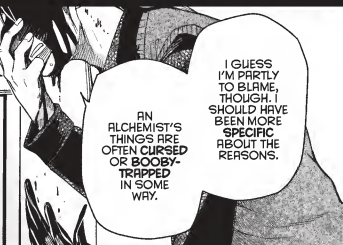
WHY'D
YOU
DO
THAT
--?!



THUD



B-BUT
WHY...?



AN
ALCHEMIST'S
THINGS ARE
OFTEN CURSED
OR BOOBY-
TRAPPED IN
SOME WAY.

I GUESS
I'M PARTLY
TO BLAME,
THOUGH. I
SHOULD HAVE
BEEN MORE
SPECIFIC
ABOUT THE
REASONS.



AND
BETTER
ME THAN
YOU.

WHEW!



HMM?
THAT
DOESN'T
MATTER.

IT WASN'T
ANYTHING
TO WRITE
HOME
ABOUT
ANYWAY.

Y-YOUR
FACE...

NOW
YOU'RE
HURT
...!

Y-YOU
WERE
SAFE!
WHY'D
YOU
PROTECT
ME...?



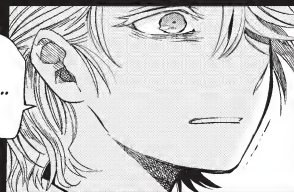
DON'T BE
IN SUCH A
RUSH
FOR NEW
SCARS.

YOU'RE
FINALLY
HEALTHY
AND
WHOLE.



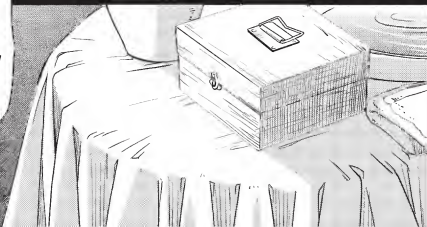
C'MERE.

!...



I'VE GOT
EXPERIENCE
PATCHING
PEOPLE UP.
I KNOW HOW
TO DO A
GOOD
JOB...

IN
MY OWN
WAY, AT
LEAST. I'VE
GOT NO
FORMAL
TRAINING.



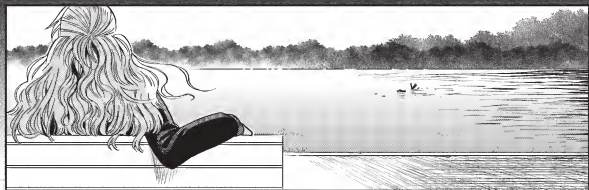


I'M
SORRY.



NEXT
TIME, I'LL...
I'LL BE
A BETTER
BODY-
GUARD...!

I WON'T
LET YOU
GET
HURT
AGAIN.





I...
I GUESS
I DON'T
REALLY
KNOW
WHAT
TO SAY.



WHEN
WE'RE HAPPY,
WE KNOW
IT. NO ONE
NEEDS SOME
BUSYBODY
TRYING TO
TELL THEM
HOW IT ALL
WORKS.

PEOPLE'RE
RESPONSIBLE
FOR THEIR
OWN
HAPPINESS.



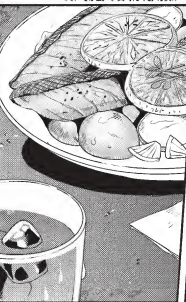
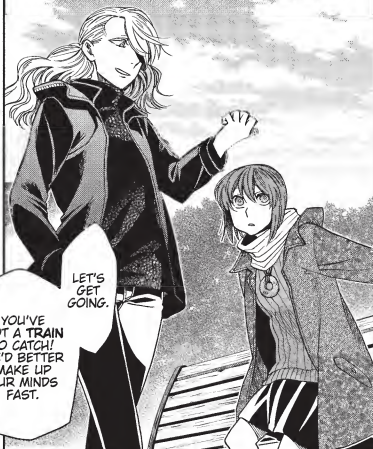
THANKS
FOR
LISTENING.

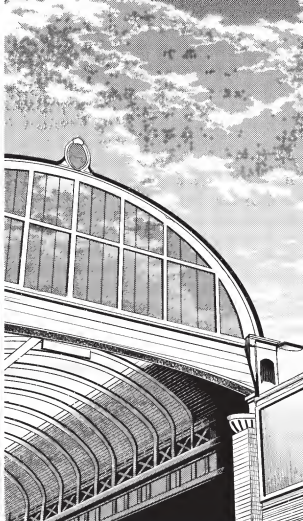
I NEVER
REALLY
FORGET THAT
STUFF, BUT
TALKING
ABOUT IT
MAKES
IT FEEL
FRESHER.

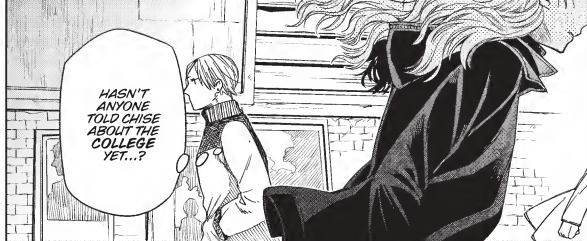


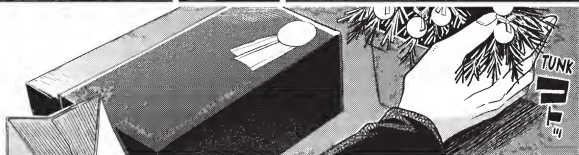
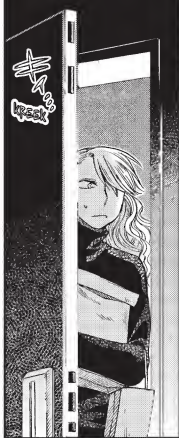
HEY, IT'S
MY PAST
AND MY
PROBLEMS.

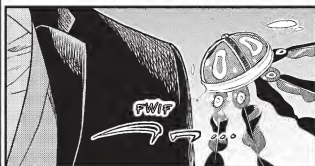
YOU
SHOULDN'T
LET
YOURSELF
FRET ABOUT
ANY OF IT.

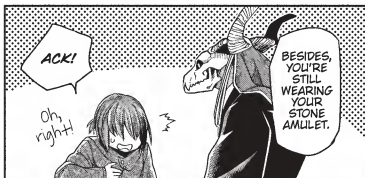
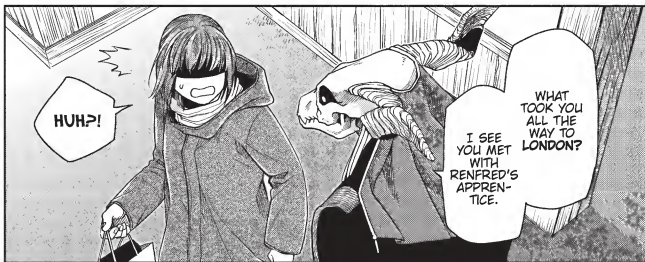


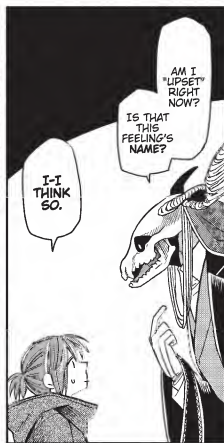
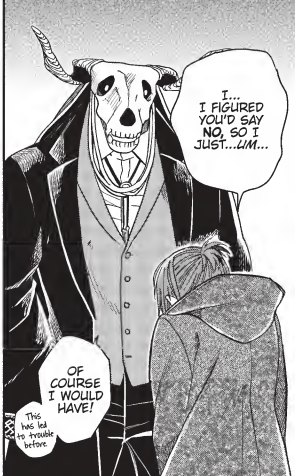
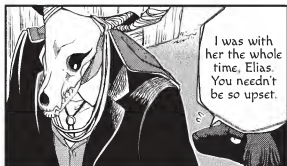














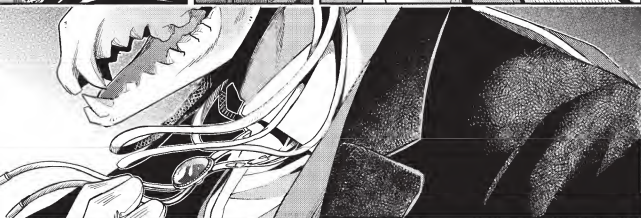
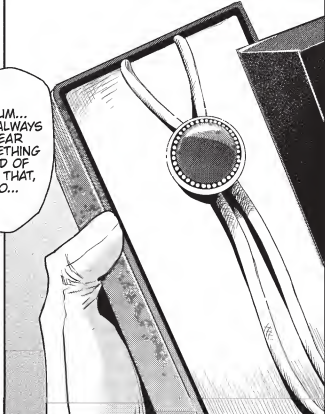


I...I'M
SORRY IF
YOU DON'T
LIKE IT...

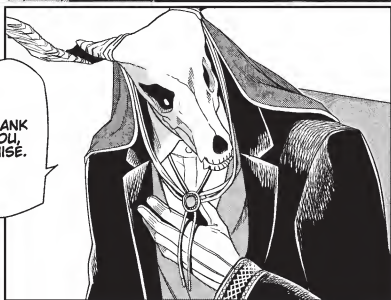


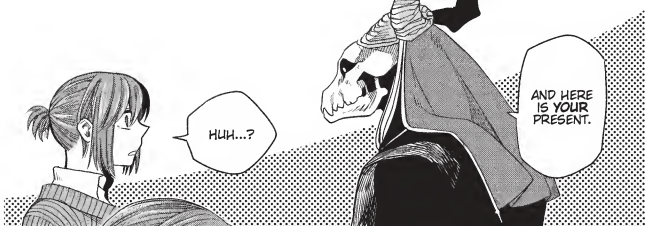
I
THOUGHT
IT MIGHT
FEEL COM-
FORTABLE
TO YOU.

U-UM...
YOU ALWAYS
WEAR
SOMETHING
KIND OF
LIKE THAT,
SO...



THANK
YOU,
CHISE.





HUH...?

AND HERE
IS YOUR
PRESENT.



SHNOFF

SHNOFF
...



I EVEN
EQUIPPED
IT WITH
A LITTLE
TRICK.

YES.

YOU
MADE
IT? BY
HAND?!



BUT I
THOUGHT
I'D MAKE
ONE FOR
YOU THIS
YEAR.

SNIFF
SNIFF

I'VE
ONLY MADE
THEM FOR
ANGELICA
AND A FEW
OTHERS
BEFORE.

IT'S
HUGE
...!



I THINK
THIS ONE I
MADE FOR
YOU IS MY
BEST YET.

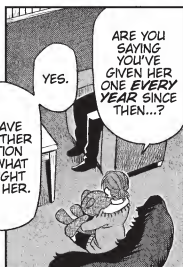


ANGELICA
SAID SHE
WANTED
A TEDDY
BEAR FOR
CHRIST-
MAS.

SOME
YEARS
AGO
NOW...



I HAVE
NO OTHER
NOTION
OF WHAT
I MIGHT
GIVE HER.



ARE YOU
SAYING
YOU'VE
GIVEN HER
ONE *EVERY*
YEAR SINCE
THEN...?

YES.



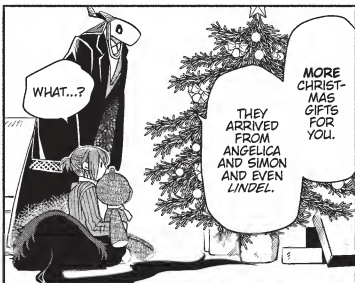
HMM?
WHAT'S
ALL
THAT?



THANK
YOU.



MY UNDER-
STANDING
IS THAT
GIFTS FOR
CHILDREN
SHOULD
BE PLACED
BENEATH
THE TREE.



WHAT...?

THEY
ARRIVED
FROM
ANGELICA
AND SIMON
AND EVEN
LINDEL.

MORE
CHRIST-
MAS
GIFTS
FOR
YOU.

LET'S SAVE
THESE FOR
TOMORROW,
SHALL WE?

AND I
BELIEVE IT'S
ALSO PROPER
FOR THE
GIFTS TO BE
OPENED ON
CHRISTMAS
DAY.

THAT
IS THE
CUSTOM,
IS IT NOT?



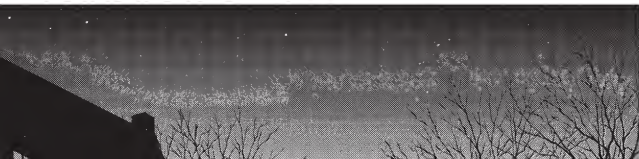
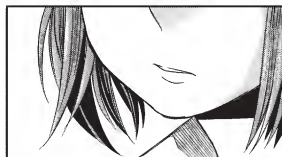
I'LL GIVE
YOU YOUR
SCOLDING
AFTER-
WARDS.

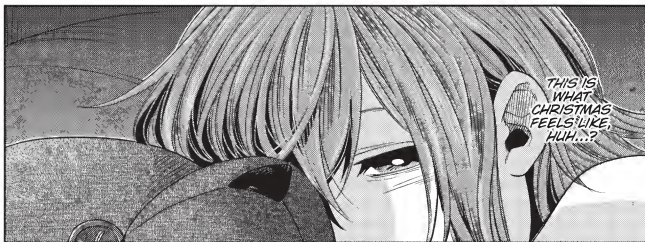
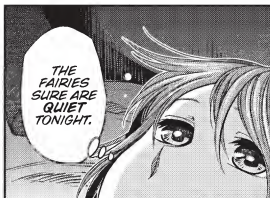
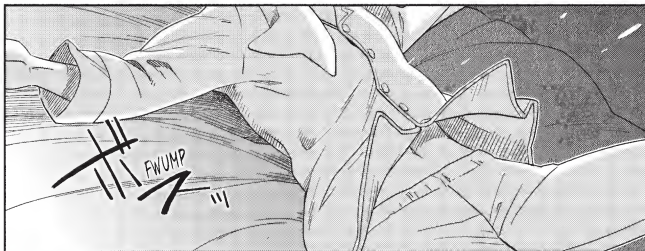
DARN.

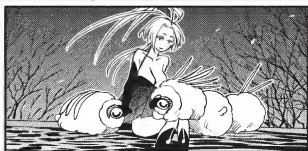
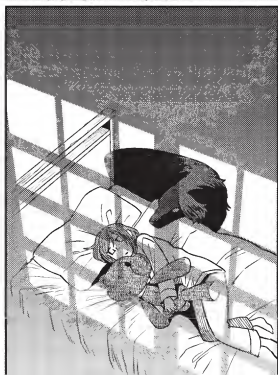
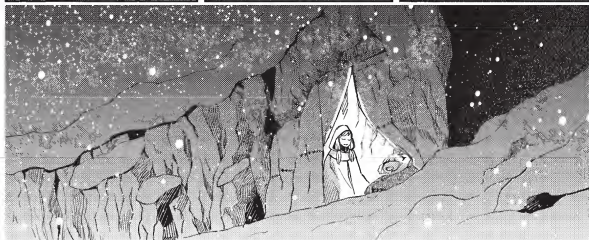
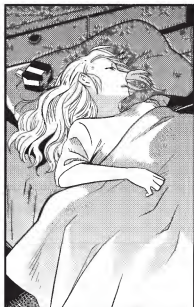
HE
DIDN'T
FORGET.



FOR NOW,
PERHAPS
WE SHOULD
HAVE
SUPPER.





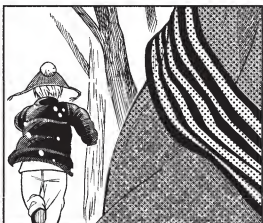




IT'S
STILL SO
HARD TO
BELIEVE.

FOR
THE FIRST
TIME IN
A LONG,
LONG
TIME...

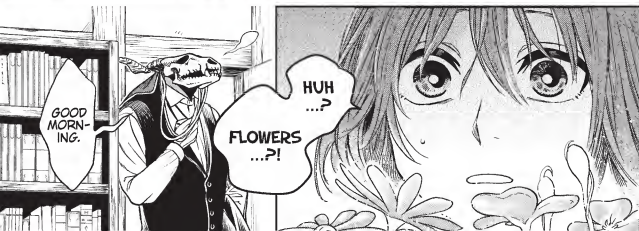
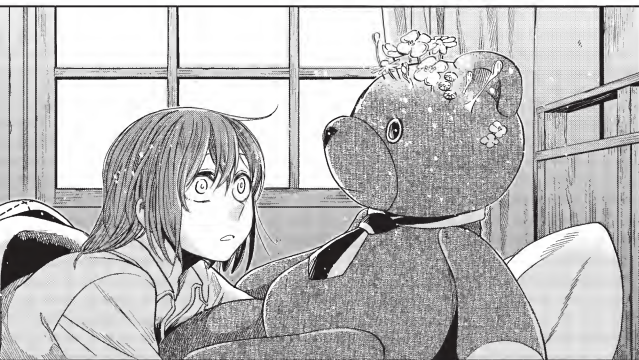
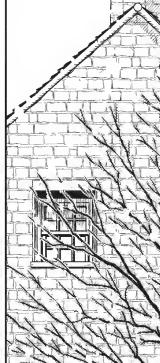
I'M
ACTUALLY
LOOKING
FORWARD
TO
TOMORROW.

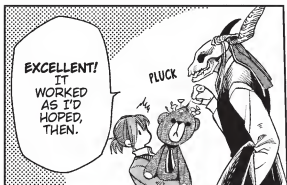


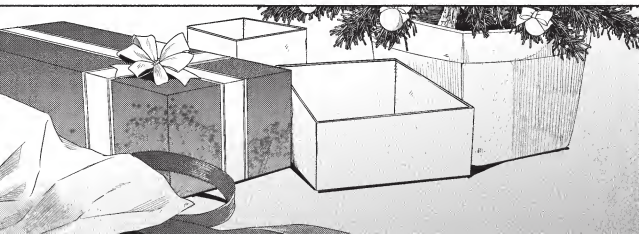
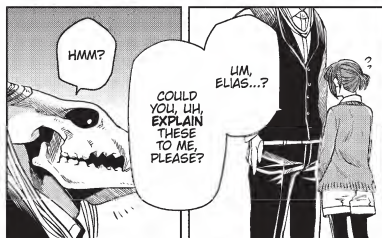
Chapter 28: Look before you leap. I



Chapter 28: Look before you leap. I









ANGELICA'S
GIFT IS--

AHA!
SHE DOES
QUICK
WORK, AS
ALWAYS.



OH,
HANDY!
I DIDN'T
HAVE ONE.

AND IT
SEEMS
SIMON
SENT A
WRIST-
WATCH.

THE
FISH ARE
FROM HIS
SELKIE
FAMILAR.



AH, YES.
YOUR
GIFTS.

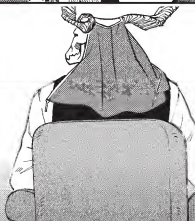
LINDEL
SENT SHED
DRAGON
SCALES,
WHICH CAN
BE USED FOR
A VARIETY OF
CRAFTS.

DRAGONS
MOLT...?



SURE.

WOULD
YOU LET ME
SEE THE
CHARM YOU
RECEIVED
WHEN WE
WERE ON
THE OTHER
SIDE?

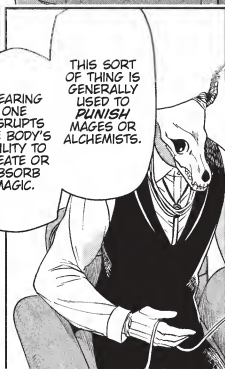


YOU ARE
NOT TO DO
EXPERIMENTS
OR USE
ANY MAGIC
WITHOUT
PERMISSION
AND SUPERV-
SION. LINDER-
STOOD?

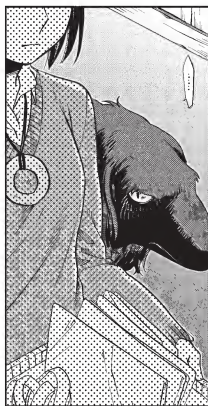
OKAY.

MOST
CONSIDER IT
STIFLING,
BUT GIVEN
HOW OVER-
TAXED YOUR
BODY IS,
NATURALLY,
THIS OUGHT
TO PROVIDE
RELIEF.

WEARING
ONE
DISRUPTS
THE BODY'S
ABILITY TO
CREATE OR
ABSORB
MAGIC.



THIS SORT
OF THING IS
GENERALLY
USED TO
PUNISH
MAGES OR
ALCHEMISTS.



THERE'S SO MUCH I CAN'T DO.





WHETHER
I CAN USE
MAGIC OR
NOT, MY
BODY STILL
MOVES.

I'LL START
BY DOING
WHATEVER
PHYSICAL
CHORES
I CAN.



WELL...
I CAN
STILL WRITE
NORMAL
LETTERS
AND ASK
HAZEL TO
DELIVER
THEM.

AND
THERE'S
A LOT OF
GARDENING
I CAN
DO.



I'D
RATHER
GO
SOONER
THAN
LATER.

OH, YOU
CAN DO
THAT ANY
TIME.



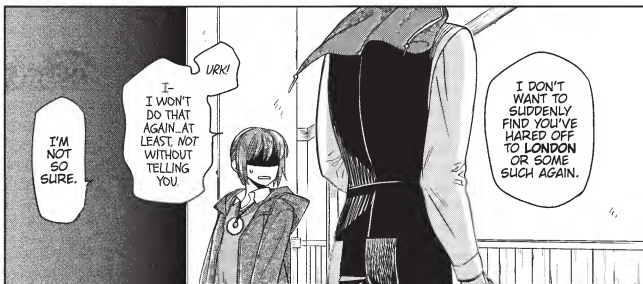
ALL
RIGHT.
I'LL
ACCOMPANY
YOU.

HUH?



ELIAS.

I'M GOING
TO VISIT
SIMON AND
THANK HIM
FOR THE
GIFT.



I'M
NOT
SO
SURE.

I-
I WON'T
DO THAT
AGAIN...AT
LEAST, NOT
WITHOUT
TELLING
YOU.

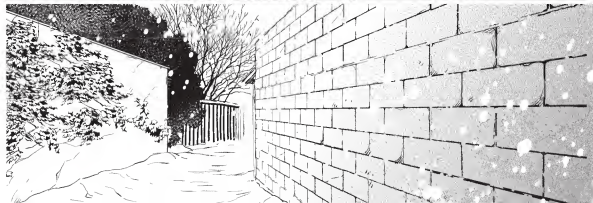
URK!

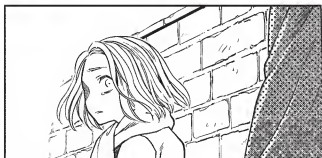
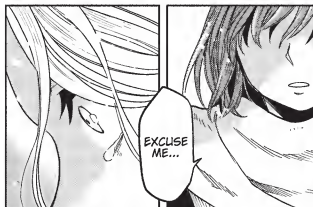
I DON'T
WANT TO
SUDDENLY
FIND YOU'VE
HARED OFF
TO LONDON
OR SOME
SUCH AGAIN.







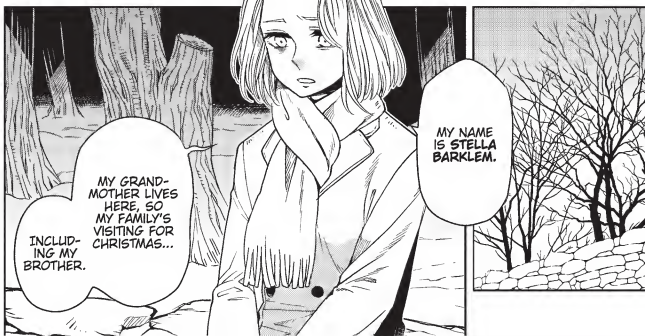


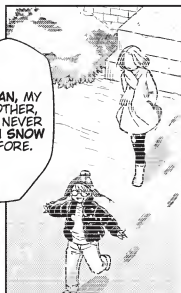




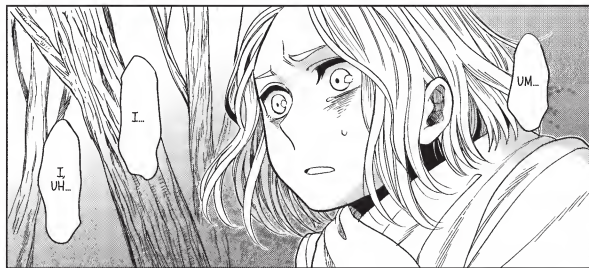
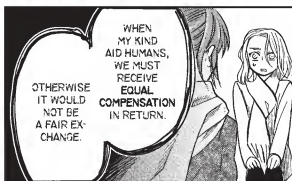
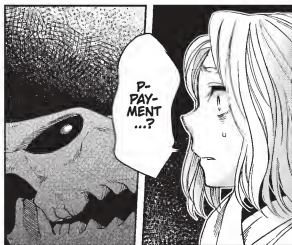
PLEASE
HELP ME
FIND MY
LITTLE
BROTHER!

PLEASE
--!











I'LL...

I'LL
MAKE
SWEETS
FOR YOU!



I...
I DON'T
HAVE ANY
MONEY,
SO...

TH-
THAT'S
ALL I
CAN
THINK
OF...



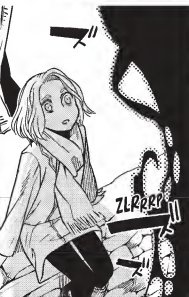
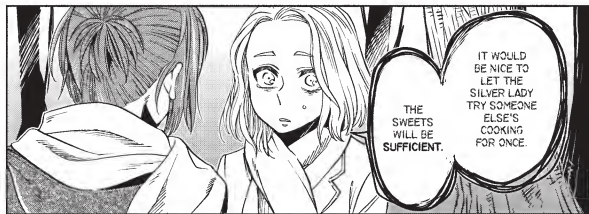
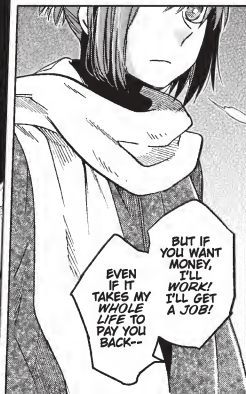
I COME
VISIT MY
GRAND-
MOTHER
ONCE A
MONTH.

L-LOTS OF
SWEETS,
WHEN I
COME TO
VISIT.

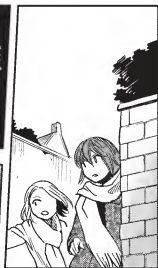
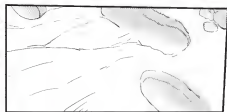
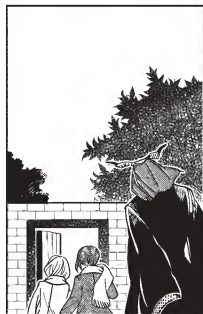
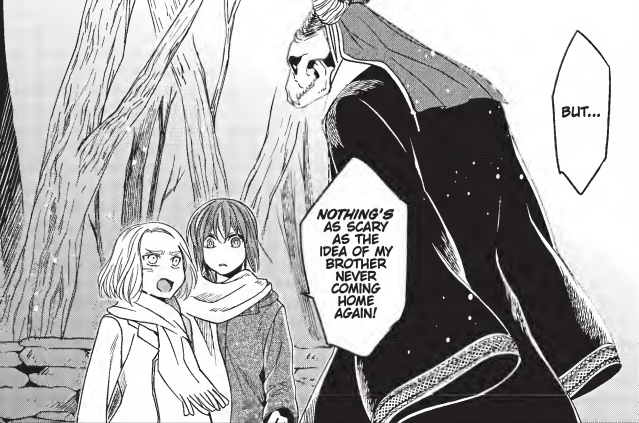
I, UM...

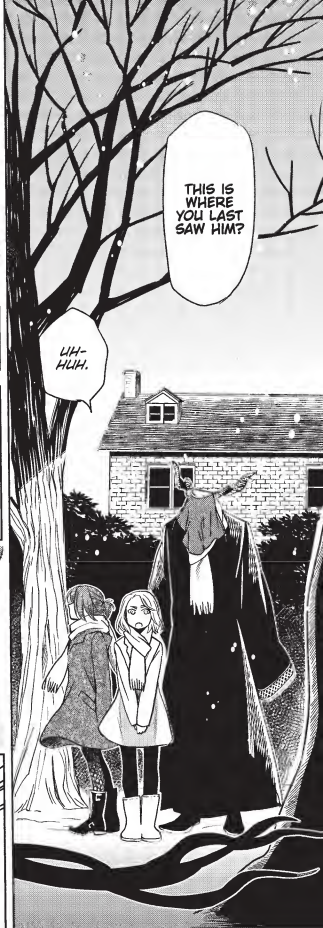
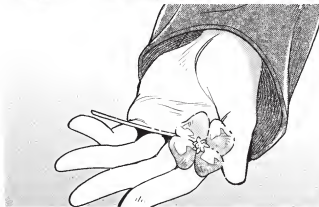
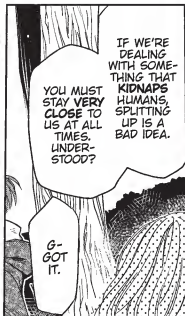


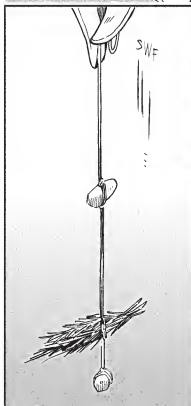
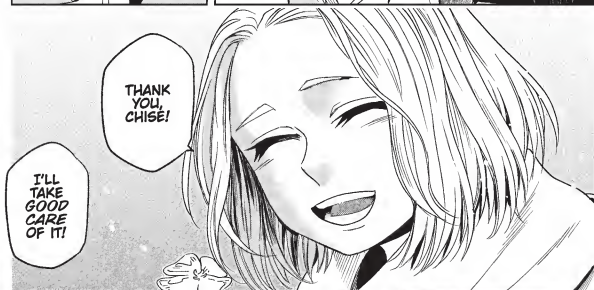
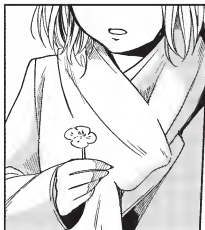
I'LL
BAKE TONS
OF STUFF
FOR YOU!
BISCUITS AND
SCONES AND
EVERYTHING!
MORE
THAN I CAN
CARRY!!

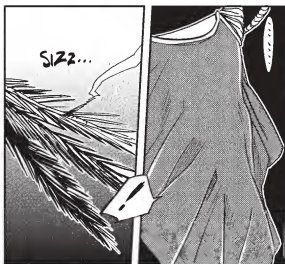














HMM. IT
APPEARS
WE
CANNOT
RELY
ON THIS
CANTRIP.

SOMEONE
IS
BLOCK-
ING IT.



PLOP
フ
ン...



?!
—



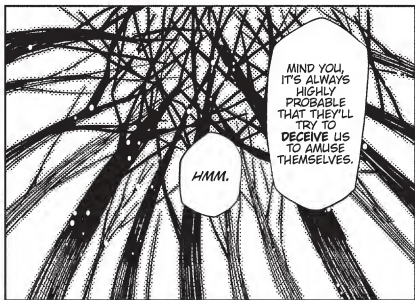
IN WHICH
CASE, OUR
BEST OPTION
IS TO FIND
NEARBY
NEIGHBORS
AND ASK
WHAT THEY'VE
SEEN.

I EXPECT
ANY OTHER
CANTRIP I
MIGHT TRY
WOULD HAVE
SIMILAR
RESULTS.

WHAT
?!
—



POFF
フ
ン...



MIND YOU,
IT'S ALWAYS
HIGHLY
PROBABLE
THAT THEY'LL
TRY TO
DECEIVE US
TO AMUSE
THEMSELVES.

HMM.

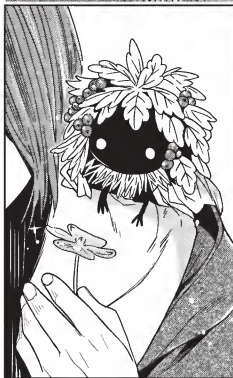
A HAWTHORN
SPIRIT...?



You
have a
problem?



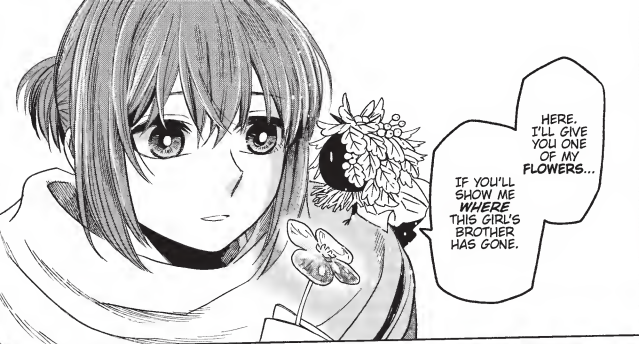
"AN APT
COMPARISON
MIGHT BE
TO A
QUEEN BEE."

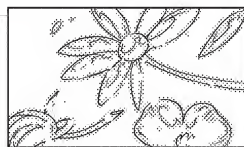
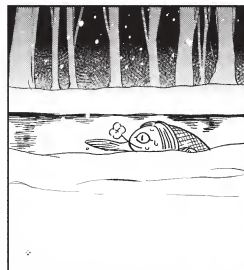
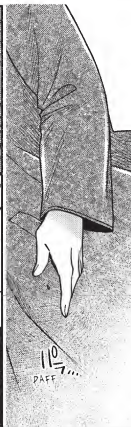


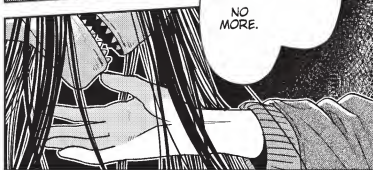
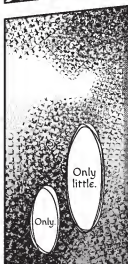
THE QUEEN
PROVIDES
THE HIVE'S
CHILDREN. IN
EXCHANGE,
THE HIVE
CARES
FOR HER.

THEY
KNOW
THEY GET
SOMETHING
FROM ME.
THAT'S WHY
THEY'RE
WILLING
TO HELP.











IT'S
OKAY,
I'M FINE.
DON'T
WORRY.

CH-
CHISE!

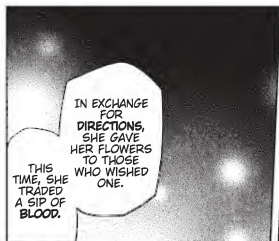
WHY'RE
YOU
BLEEDING
?!

DRIP
和
9
"



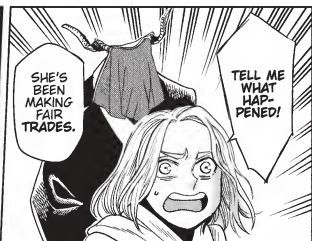
OF
COURSE
I'M GONNA
WORRY!
YOU'RE
HURT!

THAT'S
STUPID!



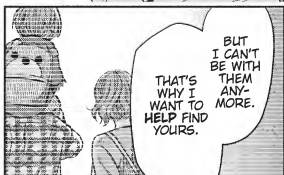
IN EXCHANGE
FOR
DIRECTIONS,
SHE GAVE
HER FLOWERS
TO THOSE
WHO WISHED
ONE.

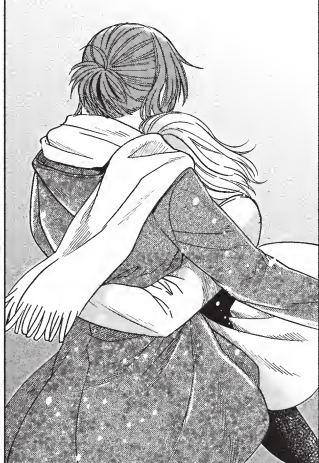
THIS
TIME, SHE
TRADED
A SIP OF
BLOOD.



SHE'S
BEEN
MAKING
FAIR
TRADES.

TELL ME
WHAT
HAP-
PENED!





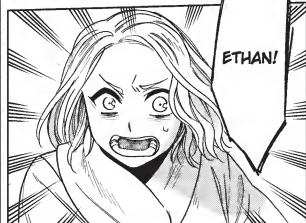
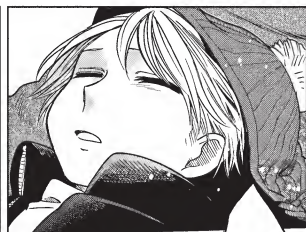


I thought
to drop by
and pay my
respects, and
what did I find
but a child
abandoned
in the snow.

The wind
whispered
to me of a
holy festival
taking place in
this world.

I gave him
shelter that
we might
observe
the fleeting
passage
of time
together.

Heh.



ETHAN!



ASHEN
EYE.

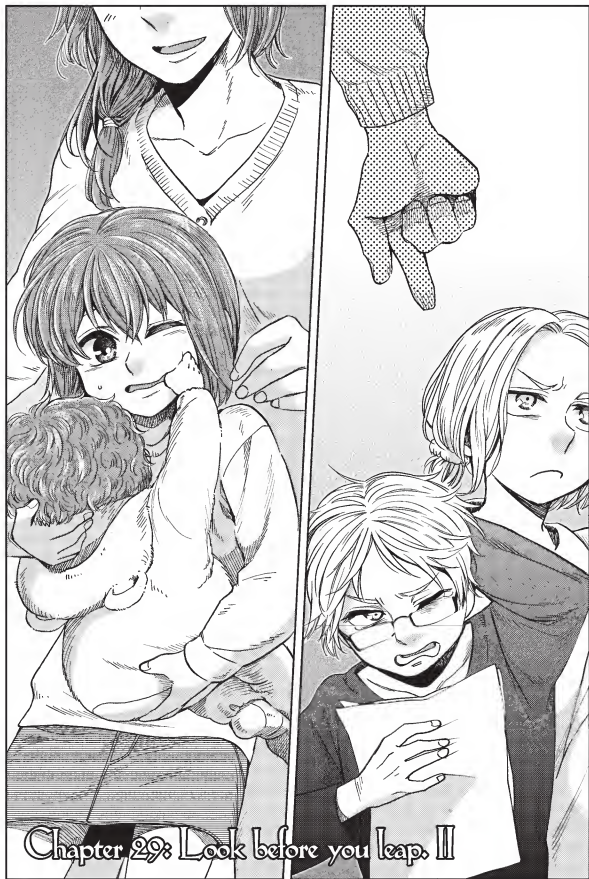


Well done,
finding this
place. Well
done indeed.

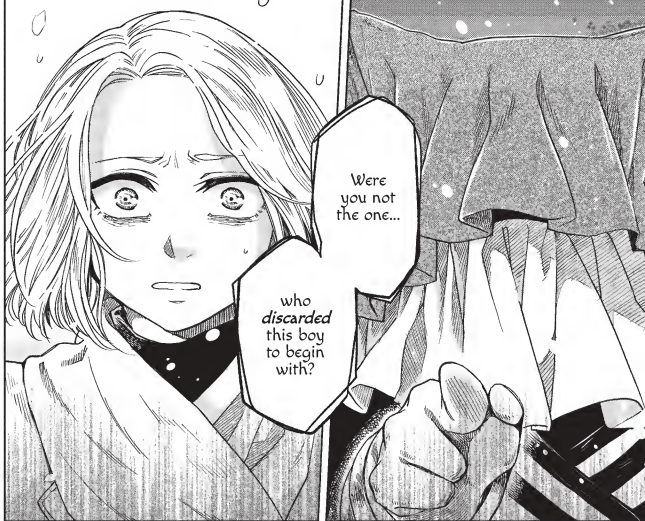
Child of
shadow,
child of
night...and
a child of
man, as
well.

My,
my.





Chapter 29: Look before you leap. II

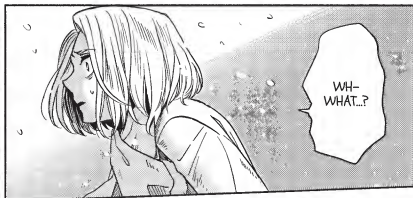


Were
you not
the one...

who
discarded
this boy
to begin
with?



WHAT'S
GOING
ON...?

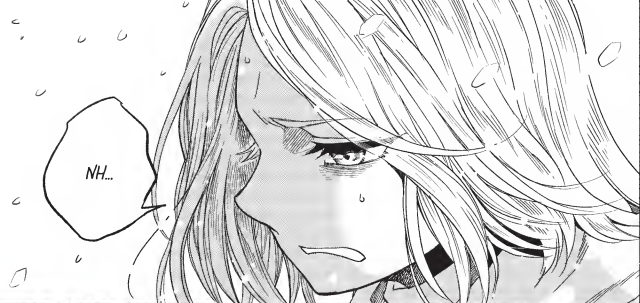


WH-
WHAT...?



Strangely,
it appears
humans
have trouble
hearing words
spoken by
their own
kind.

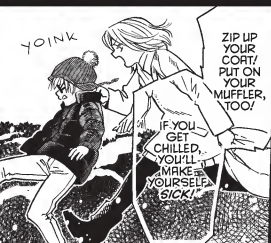
We listen
closely and
hear clearly
the words
of humans,
oh yes.



NH...



HEY! BE CAREFUL, OKAY? DON'T RUN! YOU'LL FALL!



YOINK

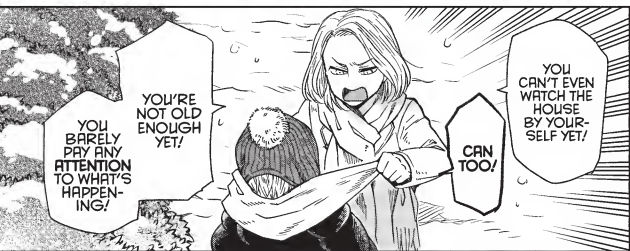
ZIP UP YOUR COAT! PUT ON YOUR MUFFLER, TOO!

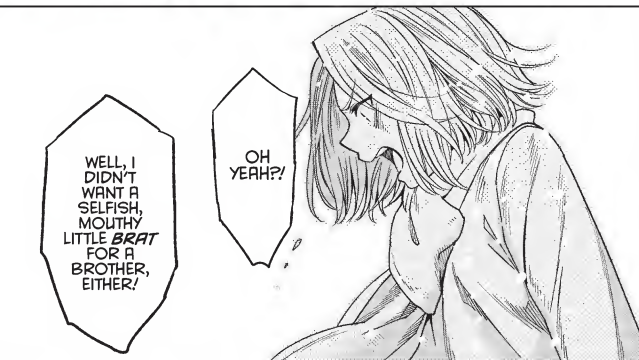
IF YOU GET CHILLED, YOU'LL MAKE YOURSELF SICK!

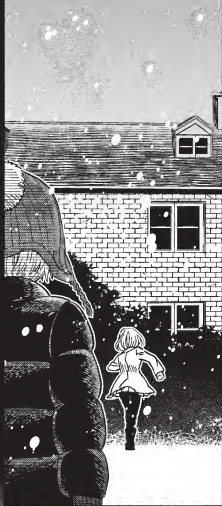


OOH! SNOW!

I'VE NEVER SEEN SNOW BEFORE!





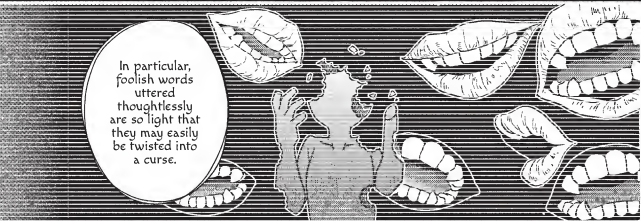




Once another being has heard and felt them, they cannot be taken back.

Words are sound given soul, and written letters embody fragments of spirit.

It's far too late for that now.



In particular, foolish words uttered thoughtlessly are so light that they may easily be twisted into a curse.



Can you even recall the name of this brother you claim is so precious?

Tell me, O Elder Sister...

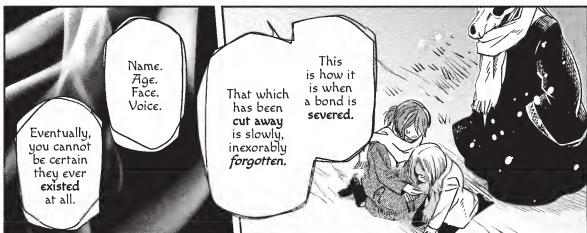
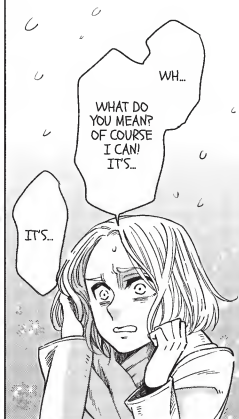


Reflect on how fortunate it is...

that you did not wish for his death.



There's no telling what may hear those words...and take them to heart.





ONCE
YOU'VE
TAKEN
THAT,
WHAT
DO YOU
INTEND
FOR IT?

ASHEN
EYE...



A fair
question.

Although,
perhaps I'll
choose to
relieve it of a
limb or two--
or add a
limb or two
instead.

Perhaps I
shall follow
your example
and keep
it as an
apprentice.



DART

NO--!

DON'T!!

I claimed an
abandoned
thing as my
own, to do
with as I
please.

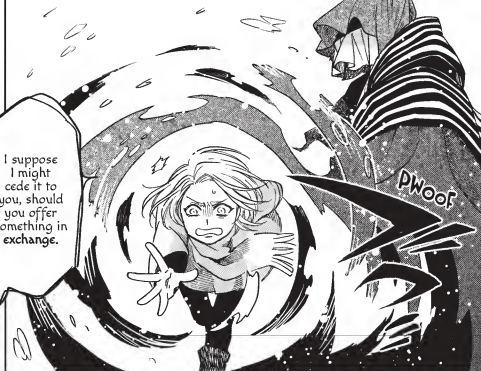
Nothing
compels me
to heed the
words of the
one who
discarded it.





I suppose I might cede it to you, should you offer something in exchange.

But...



Pwoor



But perhaps we might play a game.



Ahh...

You have nothing...



You shall join us...

Child of shadow.

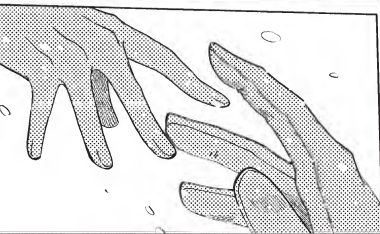


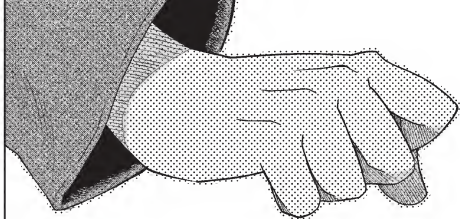
However, alone you would stand far too little chance.

SWFF



A GAME ...?





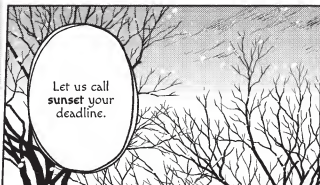
Should
you fail,
both
belong
to me.

Should
you find
them by
then,
victory is
yours, and
they go
free.



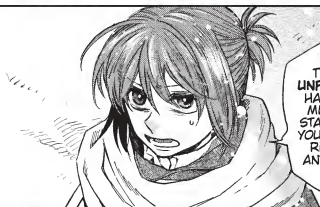
Why?
Because in
this way,
you will both
proceed with
the utmost
gravity.

Let us call
sunset your
deadline.



THIS IS
UNFAIR! WE
HAVE TOO
MUCH AT
STAKE, AND
YOU'RE NOT
RISKING
ANYTHING.

WE'RE
AT TOO BIG
A DISAD-
VANTAGE.



Search
as you
have never
searched
before.

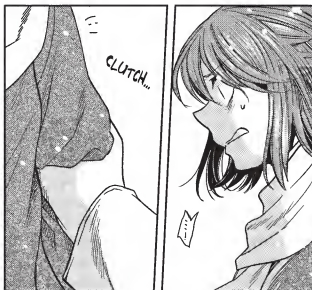
Use your
animal nose
and follow
the scent.



Go
now.

SWFF







Chise.



If you don't find him at first, then you just go back and try looking again.

BUT...

PAT
PAT

It's fine. All we have to do is find them, right?

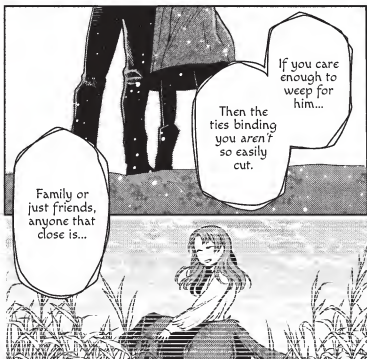


POMF
TO



There's no way you can't find each other again on this tiny hill.

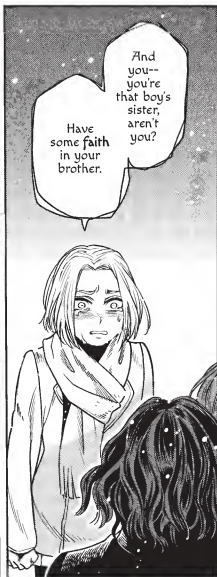
You two found each other even though you're from opposite sides of the world.



Family or just friends, anyone that close is...

Then the ties binding you aren't so easily cut.

If you care enough to weep for him...



Have some faith in your brother.

And you-- you're that boy's sister, aren't you?



IT'LL
BE
OKAY.

SWE
7



MAYBE
THAT WAS
MEANT
TO BE A
HINT...?



"USE YOUR
ANIMAL
NOSE
AND FOLLOW
THE
SCENT."



SHOULD
WE
RELY ON
RUTH?
BUT IF
WE DO,
WE MIGHT
WIND UP
FOLLOWING
A FALSE
TRAIL...

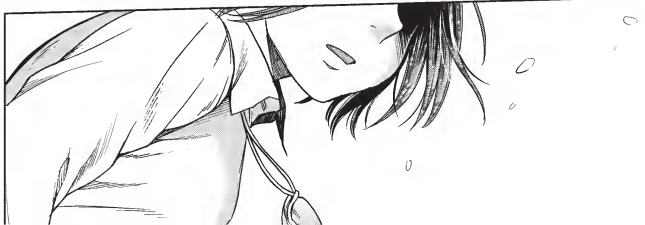
GOTCHA.
THANKS.

I can get
a vague
sense, but
I don't
think I can
track them.

Barely.
It's so
faint--
it must
be being
suppressed
somehow.

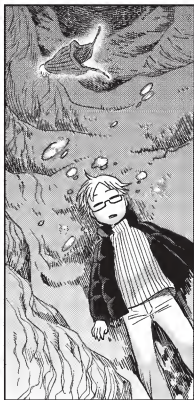
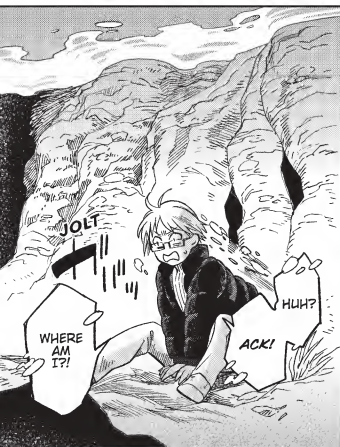
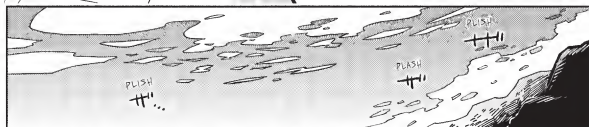


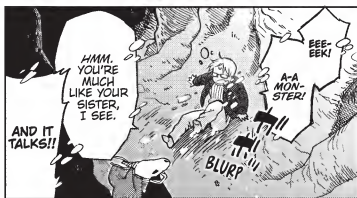
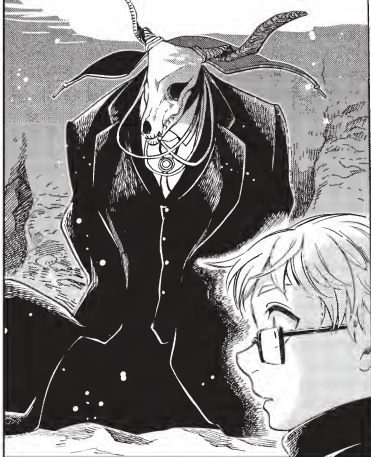
RUTH,
CAN YOU
FIND THEIR
SCENT?





I'LL BE
FINE. I'VE
ALREADY
DECIDED
WHERE I
BELONG.







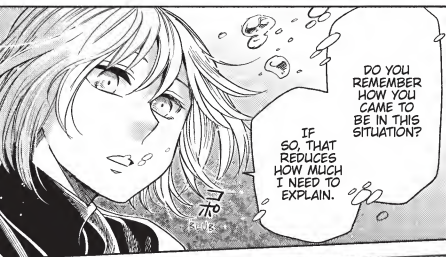
GOODNESS,
HUMAN
CHILDREN
AND THEIR
UNBRIDLED
CURIOSITY!
IT MAKES
TALKING TO
THEM SO
AWKWARD.

STOP
THAT!



PUSH

AH--!



DO YOU
REMEMBER
HOW YOU
CAME TO
BE IN THIS
SITUATION?

IF
SO, THAT
REDUCES
HOW MUCH
I NEED TO
EXPLAIN.



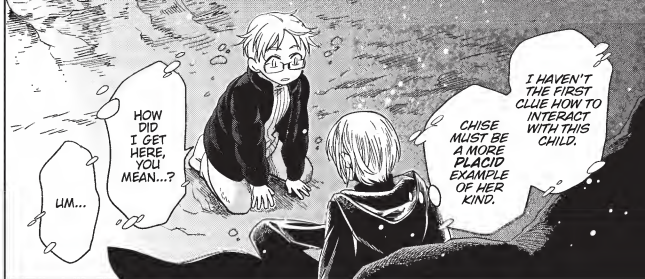
N-NOW
YOU'RE
HUMAN
?!

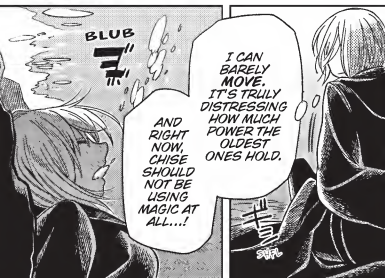
HUH?!



SLUMP

WOOWOW!!





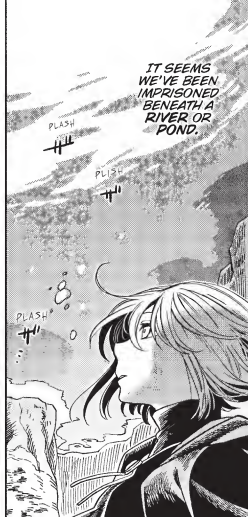
BLUB

AND
RIGHT
NOW,
CHISE
SHOULD
NOT BE
USING
MAGIC AT
ALL....!

I CAN
BARELY
MOVE.
IT'S TRULY
DISTRESSING
HOW MUCH
POWER THE
OLDEST
ONES HOLD.



PERHAPS
I'LL EAT THAT
MEDDLING OLD
COOT WHEN I
GET FREE.



IT SEEMS
WE'VE BEEN
IMPRISONED
BENEATH A
RIVER OR
POND.

PLASH

PLISH

PLASH



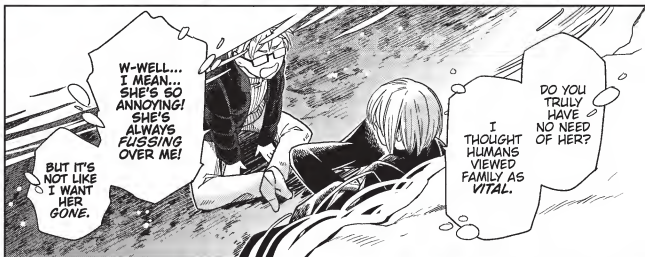
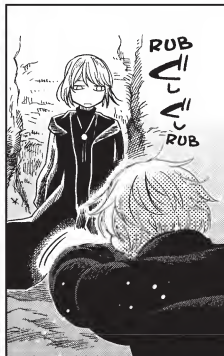
IT'S
PROBABLE
THAT MY
FAMILY
AND YOUR
SISTER ARE
SEARCHING
FOR US.

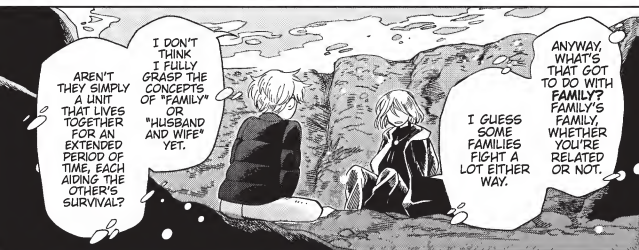
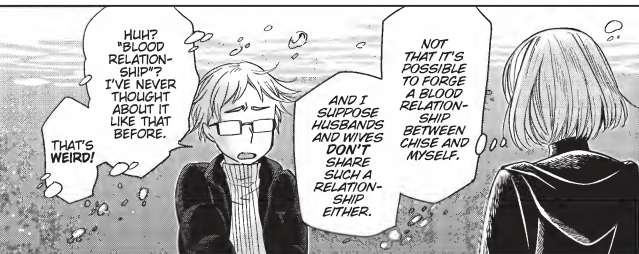


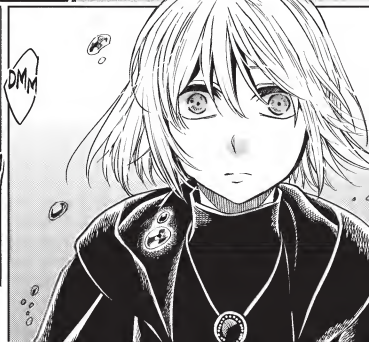
...
O-KAY...

IF YOU
TWO
ARE THINKING
ABOUT EACH
OTHER SIMUL-
TANEOUSLY,
IT SHOULD
MAKE THE
SEARCH
EASIER.

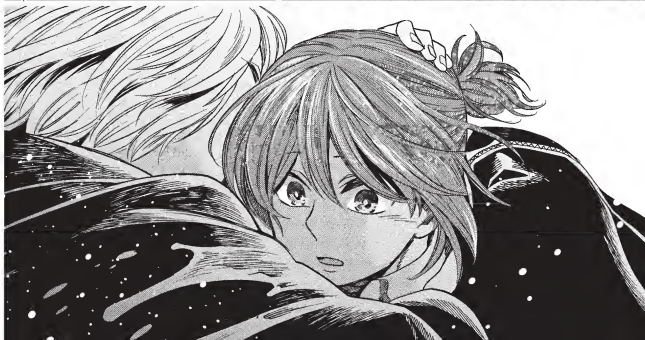
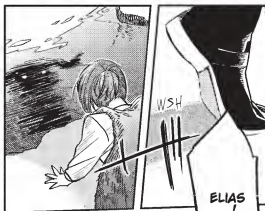
IF YOU
HAVE TIME
TO SPARE
FOR TEARS,
I SUGGEST
YOU USE
IT TO
CONCENTRATE
ON YOUR
SISTER.

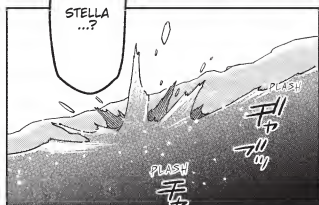


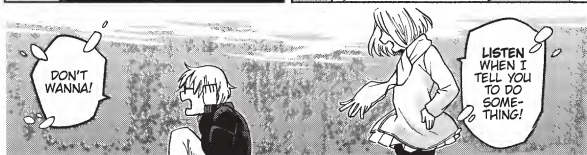














BUT I DO WANT YOU TO BE MY LITTLE BROTHER.



MAYBE I CAN'T REMEMBER YOUR NAME ANYMORE...



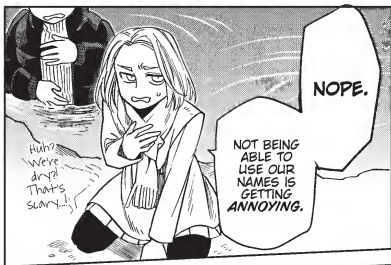
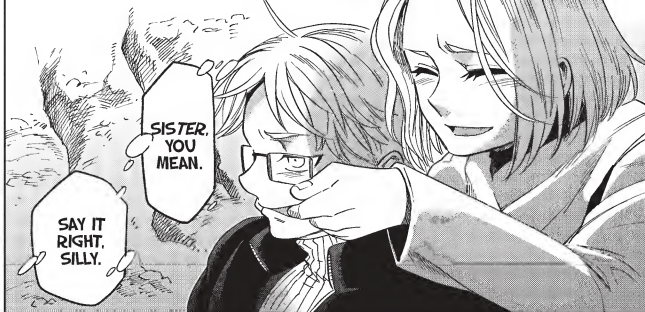
ME TOO.

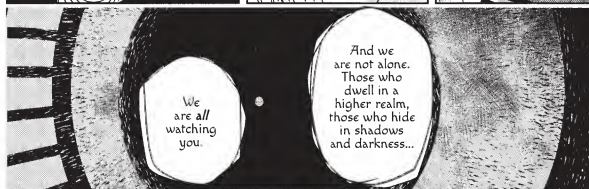
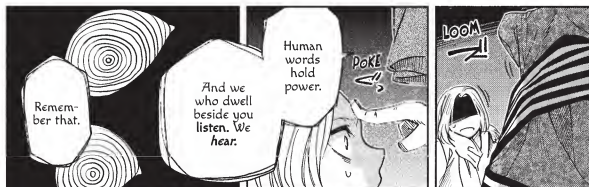


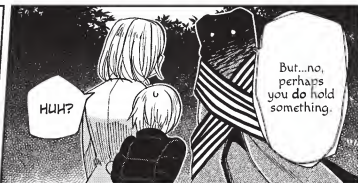
DOES THAT MEAN YOU DON'T WANT ME TO BE YOUR SISTER...?

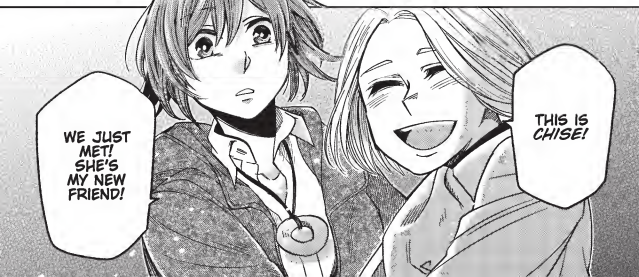
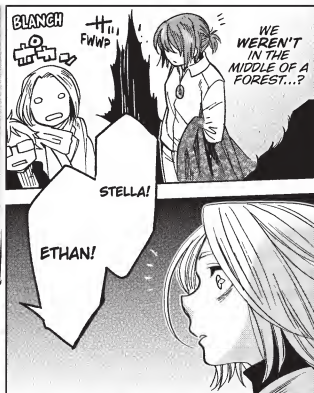


I'M OKAY WITH YOU BEING MY SIS.











IF YOU DON'T WANT TO, TELL HER, OR SHE'LL WALK ALL OVER YOU.

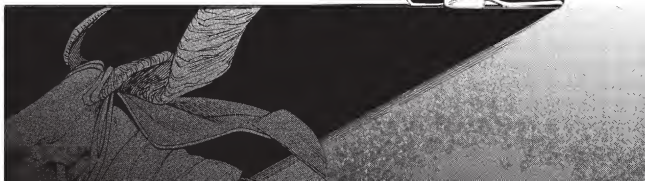


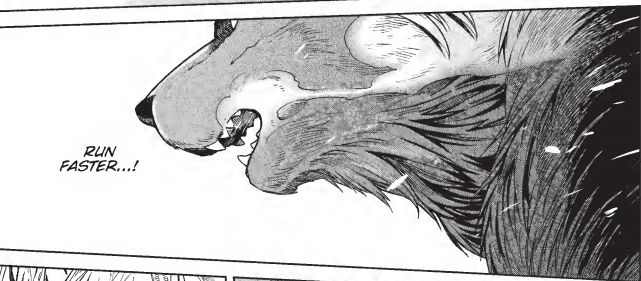
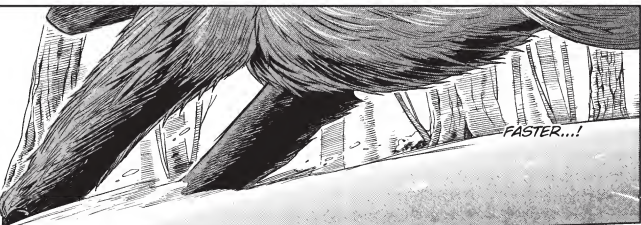
WATCH OUT. STELLA CAN BE REALLY PUSHY.



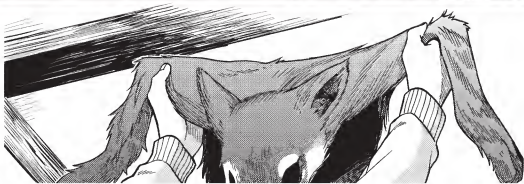
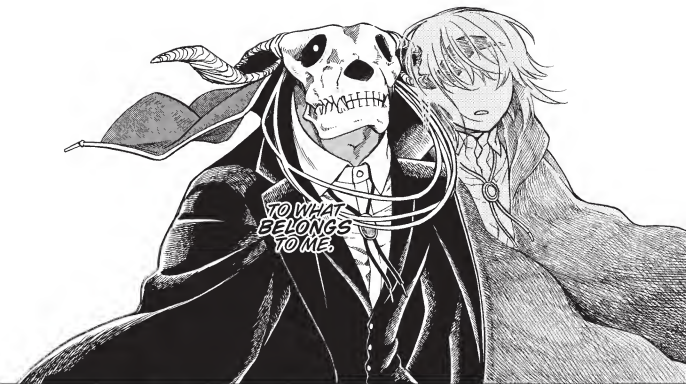
AND, OH, I NEED YOUR ADDRESS SO I CAN VISIT, LIKE I PROMISED!

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING CHISE!



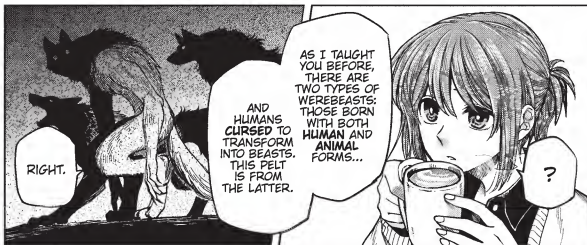
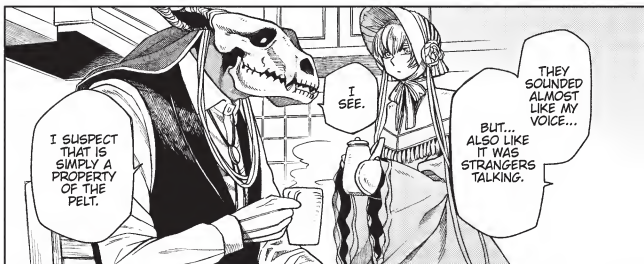
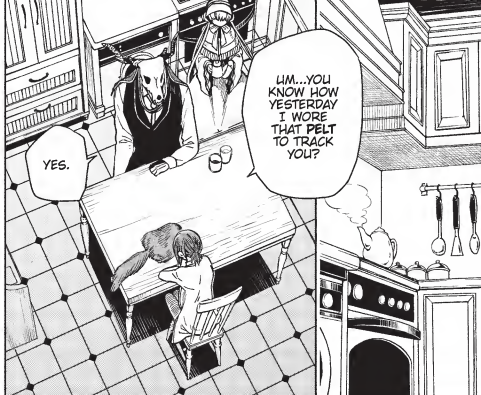


Chapter 30: Zeal without knowledge is a runaway horse.





Chapter 30:
Zeal without knowledge is a runaway horse.





SOME TRIBES
VENERATED
THEM AS
DEITIES TO
PLACATE THEM,
WHILE OTHERS
DECRIED THEM
AS DEMONS
AND A SOURCE
OF EVIL.

BUT
SINCE
ANCIENT
TIMES,
HUMANS
SAW
WOLVES
AS A
THREAT.

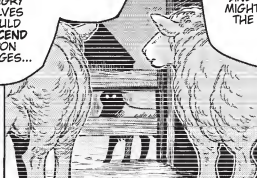
IN RECENT
YEARS,
HUMANS
HAVE
CONDUCTED
MORE
NEUTRAL
STUDIES INTO
WOLVES'
NATURES...



WHILE
FAMINE
FORCED
HUMANS
INTO
FORESTS
TO
FORAGE.

WHEN
FICKLE
WEATHER
RENDERED
PREY SCARCE,
HUNGRY
WOLVES
WOULD
DESCEND
UPON
VILLAGES...

AND POOR
HARVESTS
AFFECTED
MORE THAN
FARMS. NATU-
RAL FOREST
RESOURCES
WERE SUBJECT
TO THEM
AS WELL.



THEREFORE,
RAISING
LIVESTOCK
AS ANOTHER
FOOD SOURCE
WAS COMMON,
AND WOLVES
MIGHT ATTACK
THE STOCK.

IN OLD
EUROPE,
PLAGUES
AND FAMINES
CAUSED BY
WEATHER
MADE
FARMING
ANYTHING
BUT
RELIABLE.



BASICALLY,
YOU'RE
SAYING PEOPLE
USED TO BE
TERRIFIED OF
WOLVES, AND
SOME OF THE
REASONS
MADE SENSE.

DO YOU
FOLLOW
SO FAR?

JUST
SO.

Umm...



HUMANS
AND WOLVES
HAVE LONG
BEEN IN
COMPETITION.



BLESSINGS
AND
CURSES
ARE TWO
SIDES OF
A COIN.

SHOULD
A PERSON
SEE WOLVES
AS EVIL, THE
THOUGHT OF
BECOMING ONE
WOULD SEEM A
FRIGHTENING
CURSE INDEED.

BUT IF
ONE REVERES
THEM AS A
POWERFUL
FORCE OF
NATURE,
WOULDN'T THE
ABILITY
TO BORROW
SOME OF THAT
POWER BE A
BLESSING?



GIVEN
THAT, I
EXPECT...

THIS
Pelt WAS
PROBABLY
AN ARTIFACT
USED TO
FORGET
OR EVEN
OVERCOME
THAT FEAR.



"STRENGTH-
THEN
THEM-
SELVES"?

YOU
MEAN BY
TURNING
INTO A
WOLF?

IT WOULD
ALLOW
THE WEARER
TO STRENGTHEN
THEMSELVES.

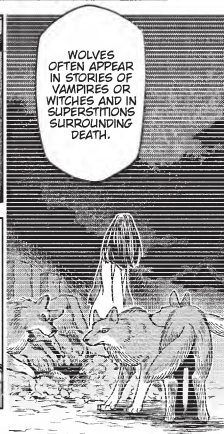


A PERSON
COULD
CONFRONT
AND OVER-
COME A
FEAR BY
BECOMING
THE VERY
THING THEY
DREAD.

IT IS
PLAUSIBLE
TO SAY THAT
HUMANS
LEARNED
TO BECOME
WOLVES
TO BANISH
THEIR FEAR.



WOLVES
OFTEN APPEAR
IN STORIES OF
VAMPIRES OR
WITCHES AND IN
SUPERSTITIONS
SURROUNDING
DEATH.





ARE
WITCHES
AND
VAMPIRES
JUST
SUPER-
STITION,
TOO?

WHICH IS
WHY THERE
ARE SO FEW
PELTS THAT
EFFECT A
TRUE TRANS-
FORMATION
WHEN A HUMAN
DONS THEM.

HOWEVER,
MANY OF THEIR
METHODS
WERE NOTHING
MORE THAN
MISCONCEPTION
OR
SUPERSTITION...



I THEORIZE
THAT THIS
TIME YOU
TOOK ON THE
FORM MOST
LIKELY TO
OVERCOME
THE FEAR
ASHEN EYE
INSTILLED
WITHIN YOU.

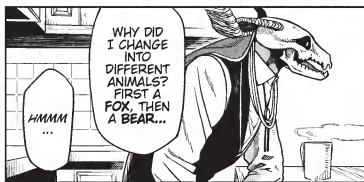
YOU
HAD A
SUBCON-
SCIOUS
DESIRE,
AND THE
PELT
ANSWERED.



OKAY.

SHOULD
THE OP-
PORTUNITY
ARISE, YOU
MAY MEET
ONE OR
TWO.

NO,
THEY EXIST.
ALTHOUGH,
THEY ARE
RATHER
DIFFERENT
THAN
HUMANS
BELIEVE.



WHY DID
I CHANGE
INTO
DIFFERENT
ANIMALS?
FIRST A
FOX, THEN
A BEAR...

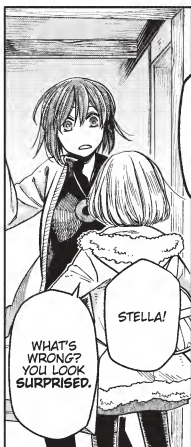
HMMM
...

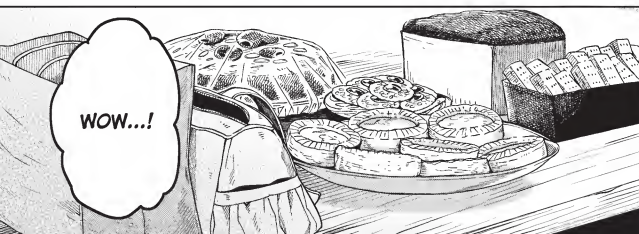


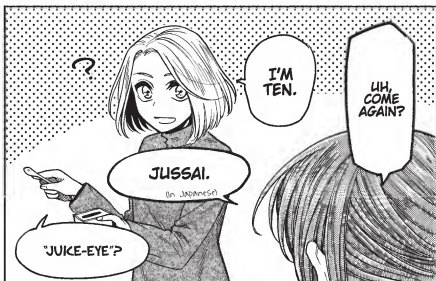
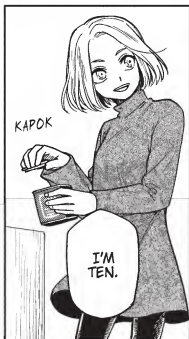
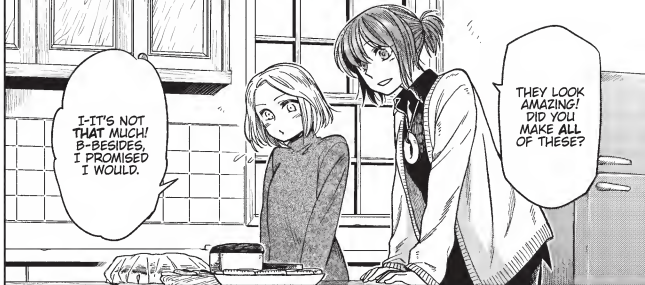
THEN,
I GUESS
THE VOICES
I HEARD
WERE
REALLY
JUST MY
OWN...?

THE PELT'S
FORMER
OWNER
LIKELY HAD
A WISH THAT
REQUIRED
BECOMING
A FOX, AND
THUS IT IS
A FOX PELT.

WHAT YOU
WISHED FOR
REQUIRED
THE ABILITIES
OF A BEAR,
THUS YOU
BECAME
ONE.

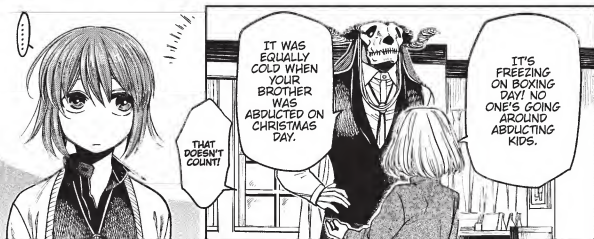
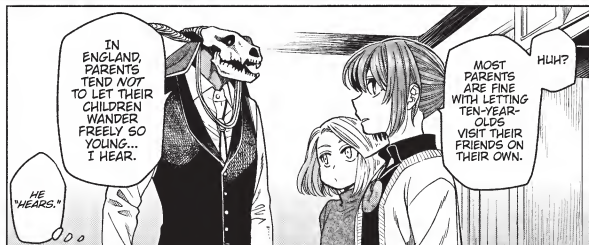


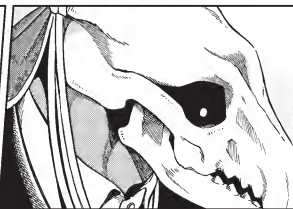
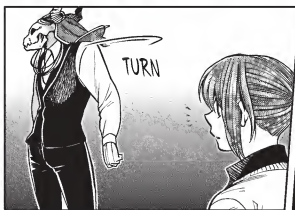
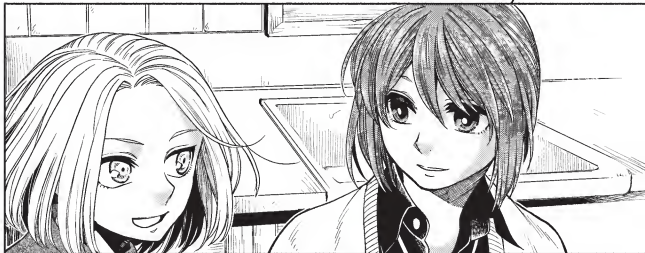
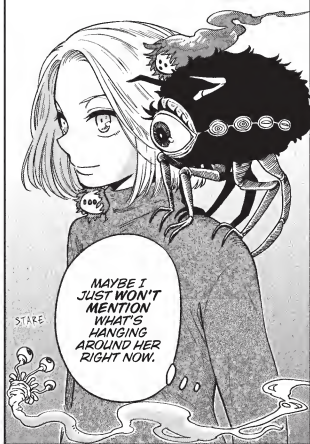


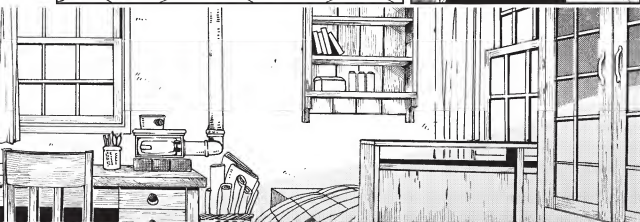
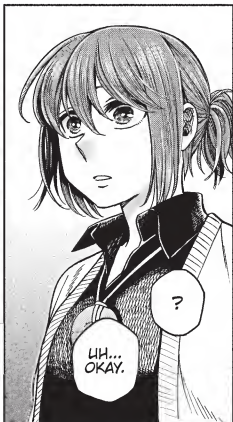
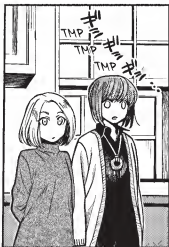
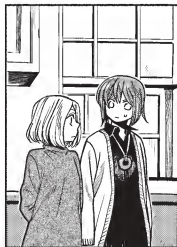
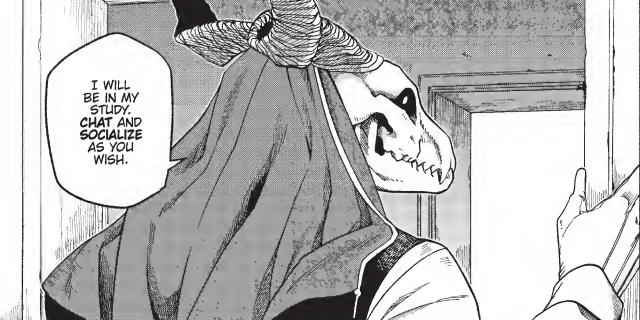


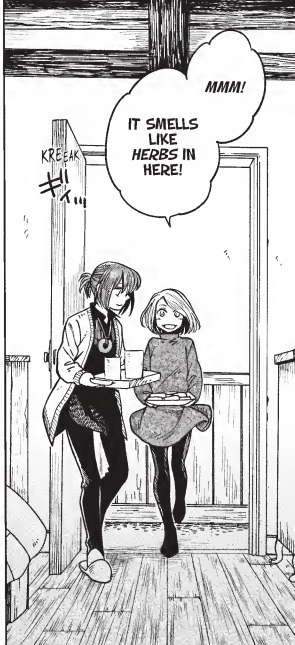
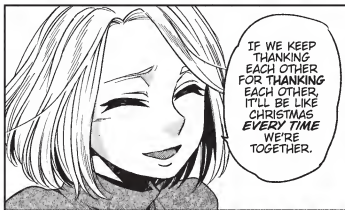


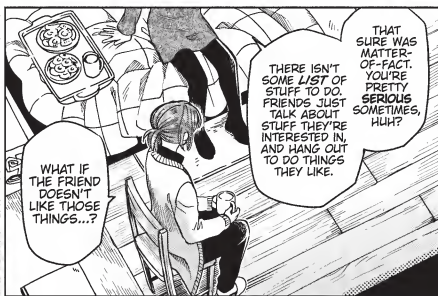
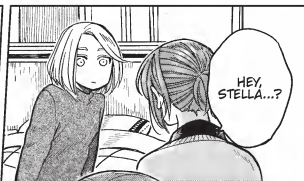
*The British version of high school, which teaches students aged 11-16 or 18.

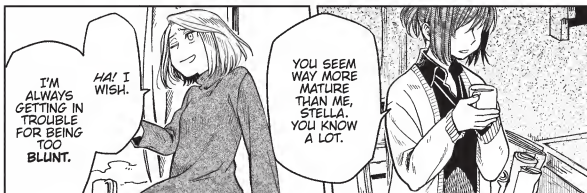
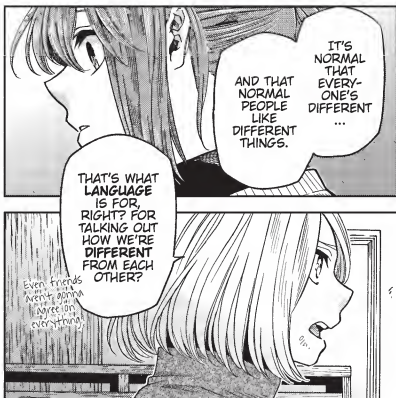














IF SOME-
ONE'S
GERMAN,
LEARNING
FRENCH
TAKES MORE
THAN A FEW
LESSONS,
YOU KNOW?

YOU
JUST
NEED
PRACTICE.



BUT IT'S
HARDER
THAN I
THOUGHT.
SOMETIMES
IT DOESN'T
GO LIKE
I WANT.

A WHILE
AGO, I
DECIDED
I'D START
SPEAKING
UP AND
SAYING
WHAT I
THINK...



I'M PRETTY
SELFISH,
ACTUALLY.

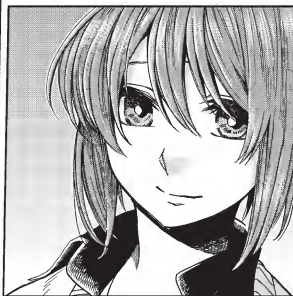
RIGHT THIS
MINUTE, I'M
THINKING ABOUT
WANTING
TO GO VISIT
YOUR PLACE
AS SOON
AS I CAN.



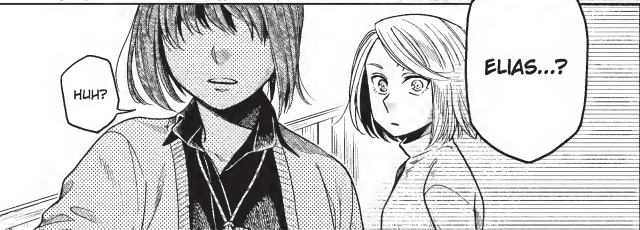
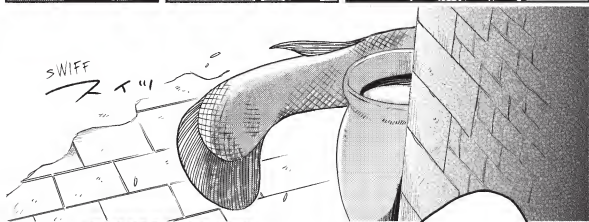
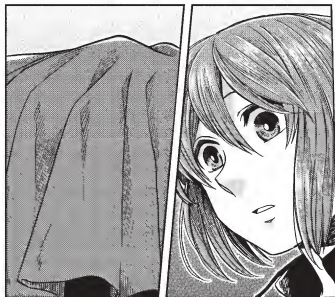
HA
HA...

JUST
DON'T
GET ALL
SELFISH
AND SELF-
ABSORBED
LIKE
ETHAN!
THAT'S
NO GOOD.

YOU
DON'T
SEEM
THE
TYPE,
THOUGH.

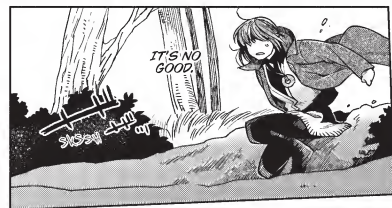
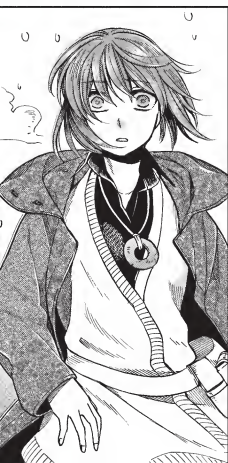


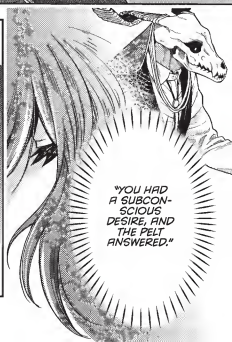
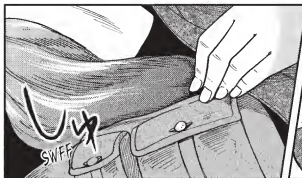


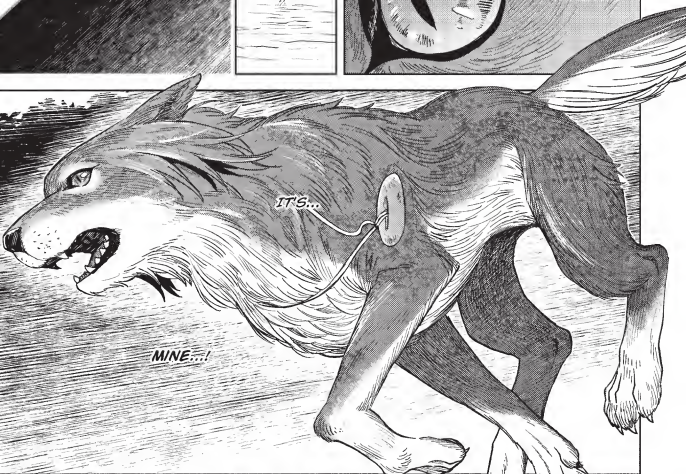
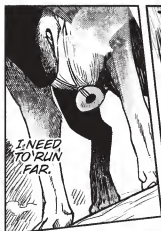




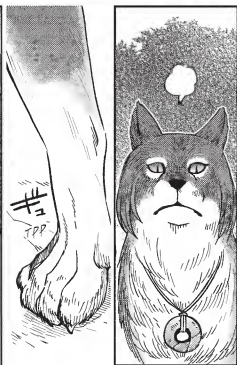
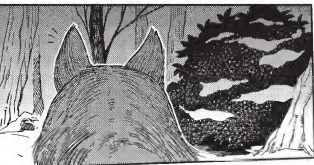


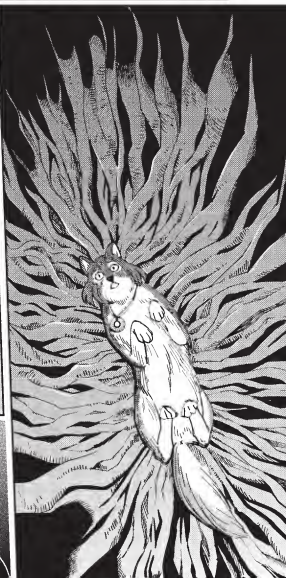
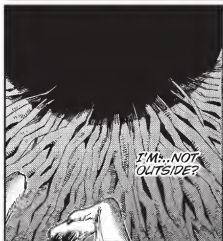
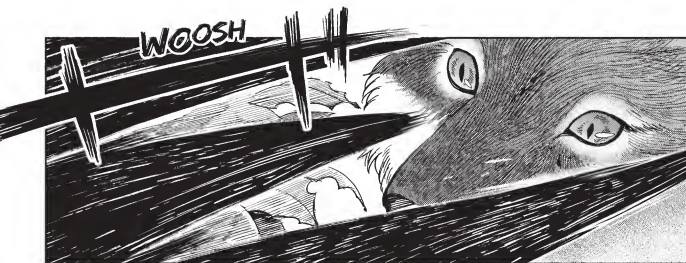


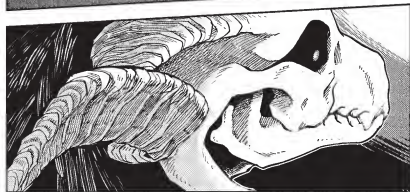
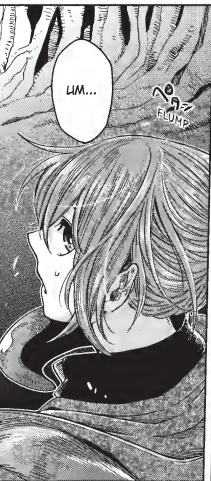














BUT
STRANGELY,
KNOWING YOU
WERE CHASING
ME MADE
ME FEEL
BETTER.

I THOUGHT
I'D LEFT
THE HOUSE
TO FIND
SOLITUDE...



IT WAS...ODD.
FOR SOME
REASON I DON'T
UNDERSTAND,
LISTENING TO
YOU TWO
CHATTING MADE
ME WANT TO
GET AWAY.



I WISHED
STELLA
WOULD
GO HOME
QUICKLY.



I DON'T KNOW
WHY. I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
ANY OF IT.

YET...
I COULD
NOT STOP
RUNNING.



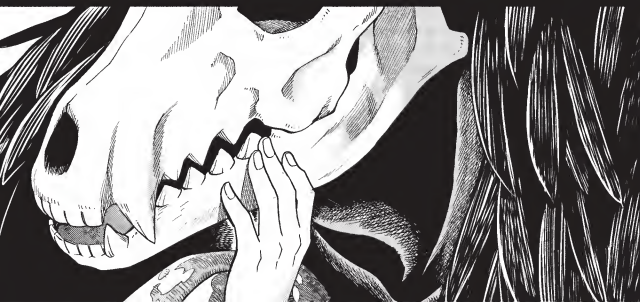
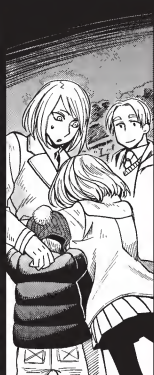
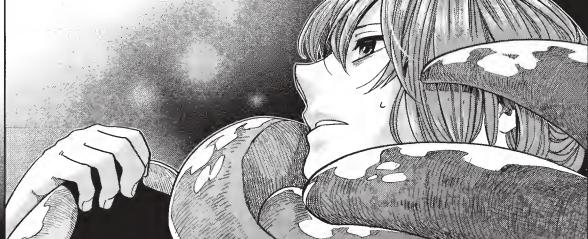
Oof!

Ow!

SQUEEZE



WELL,
YOU...





WHEN
WE GO
BACK
HOME...

LET'S
HAVE
SOME
TEA,
OKAY?



IS THERE
ANYTHING
ELSE
YOU'D LIKE
TO DO?



AND
SPEND
THE
EVENING
TALKING.

THEN
WE CAN
HAVE
SUPPER...



IF YOU
DON'T
MIND, I
WANT TO
SHARE
THEM
WITH
YOU.

STELLA
TOLD ME
ALL KINDS
OF NEAT
THINGS.

SIGH

IT
SEEMS
LIKE...

ELIAS
UNDER-
STANDS
WAY LESS
ABOUT
HIMSELF
THAN I
THOUGHT.

HOW
ABOUT
THAT?

WE
CAN DO
THE SAME
THING TO-
MORROW,
IF YOU
WANT.

OW!

AH!!

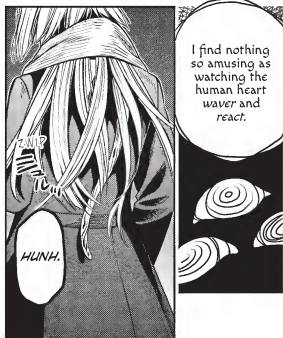
I THOUGHT
HE WAS
LEAVING
ME.

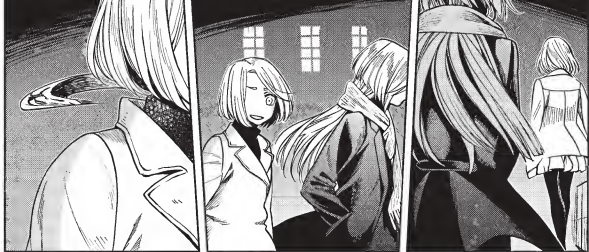
HE'S
ACTING
ALMOST
LIKE A
LITTLE KID
WHO HAD HIS
FAVORITE
TOY TAKEN
AWAY.

I
SHOULDN'T
HAVE GONE
INTO TOWN
WITHOUT
SAYING
SO.

BUT
MAYBE,
HE FELT
LIKE
I WAS
LEAVING
HIM.



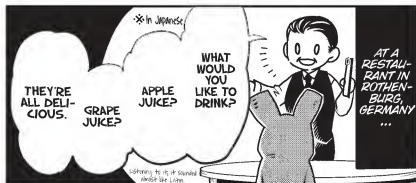




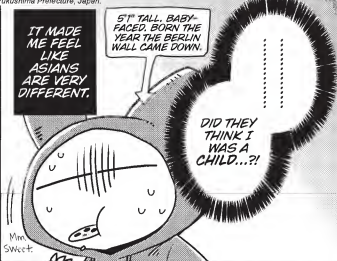
STK
F 7 11



To be continued...



British Hills is a wonderful, wonderful fragment of Ye Olde England located in Fukushima Prefecture, Japan.





SO SHE
OFTEN
ASKS
ME TO
DELIVER
LETTERS.

AS A
HOUSE-
HOLD
SPIRIT, SHE
RARELY
LEAVES
THE
PROPERTY
...

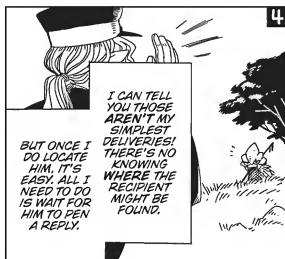
3



G'DAY! THE
NAME'S
HAZEL. I'M
A CENTAUR
COURIER.

ANYTHING
THAT CAN BE
CARRIED, I
CAN DELIVER!
BUT MOST
OF WHAT I
HANDLE ARE
LETTERS AND
PACKAGES.

1



BUT ONCE I
DO LOCATE
HIM, IT'S
EASY. ALL I
NEED TO DO
IS WAIT FOR
HIM TO PEN
A REPLY.

I CAN TELL
YOU THOSE
AREN'T MY
SIMPLEST
DELIVERIES!
THERE'S NO
KNOWING
WHERE THE
RECIPIENT
MIGHT BE
FOUND.

4



THESE DAYS,
MASTER
AINSWORTH IN
ENGLAND IS
ONE OF THE
FOLK WHO
CALLS ON ME
MOST OFTEN.

AS
IS...

HIS
HOUSE-
KEEPER,
THE
SILVER
LADY.

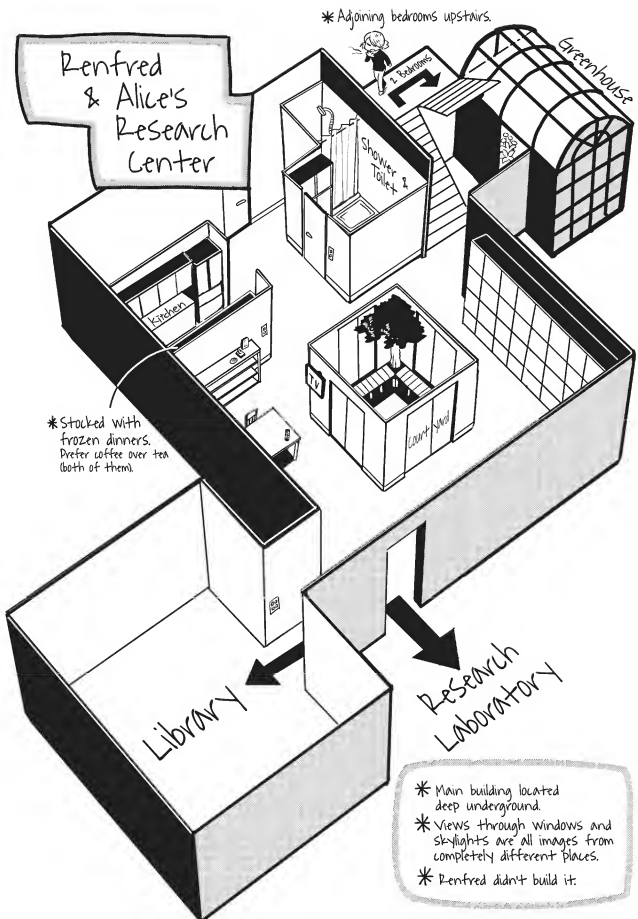
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Hmph!
Letters! Such
things reek
of human
civilization.

HE
GRUMBLES
AND
GROWLS
ABOUT
IT, BUT
ALWAYS
RESPONDS
PROMPTLY.

Silky's(?) Diary



SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

The Ancient Magus' Bride

VOLUME 6

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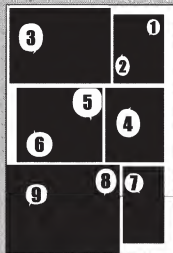
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This book reads from *right to left*, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



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Rated: TEEN

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